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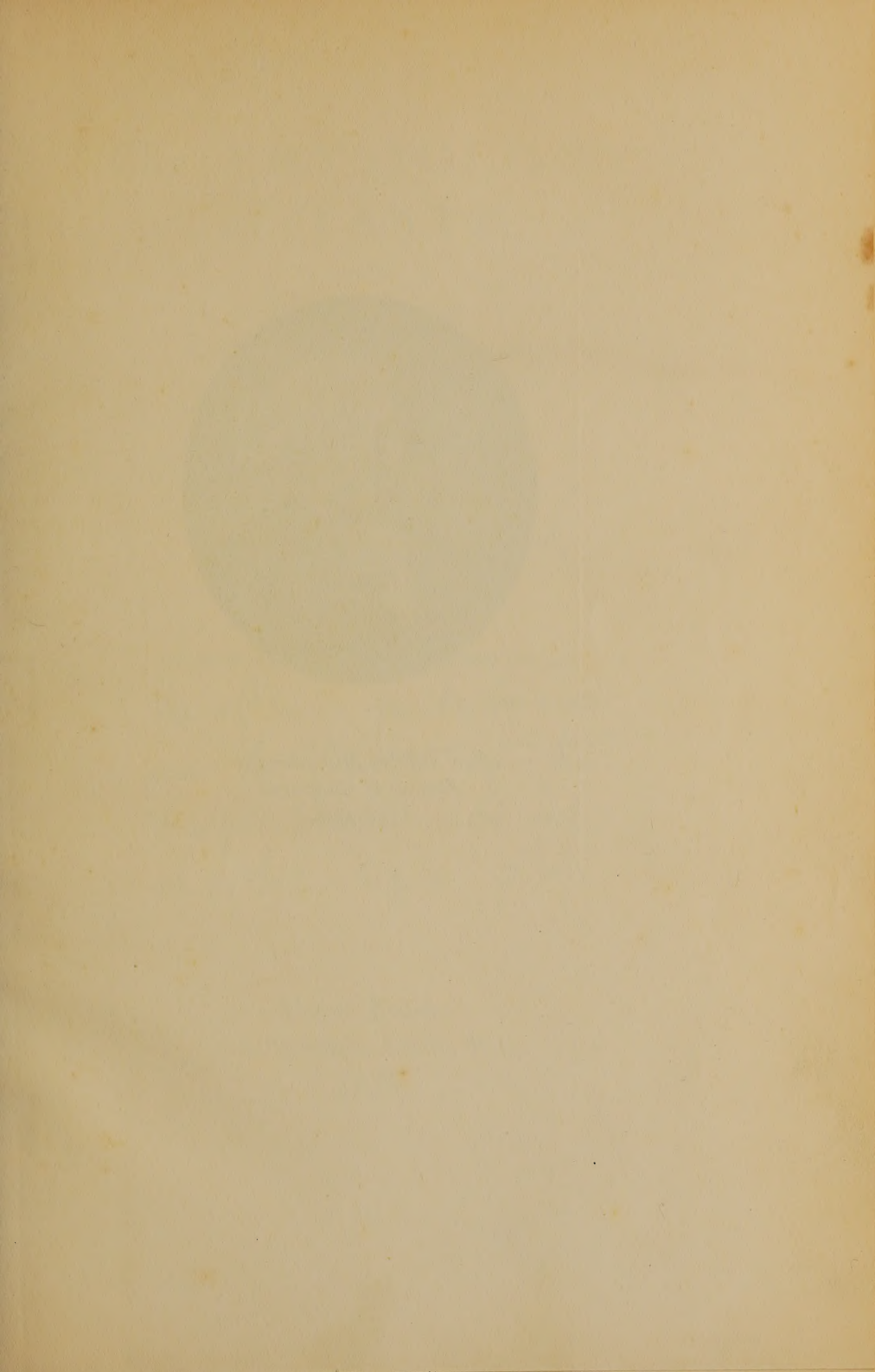
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The PHYSIOLOGY
of TASTE
newly translated

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and fifty numbered copies, of which this is*

No.....580.....





Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin
Advocate & Gastronomer
1755-1826

THE PHYSIOLOGY
OF TASTE,

or

MEDITATIONS ON
TRANSCENDENTAL GASTRONOMY:

by

BRILLAT-SAVARIN

Tyler & Hucho
Arthur Machen

With an Introduction

by

ARTHUR MACHEN;

and embellished with designs by Andrew Johnson

*The flower potato is
as the fruit of the
Hesperides — not for
mortal lips. P.Xj.*

Peter Davies

1 Bedford-street, London, W.C.

1925

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF TASTE

Printed in Great Britain by T. and A. CONSTABLE LTD.
at the University Press, Edinburgh

INTRODUCTION

IN one of the delightful books by the author of *Elizabeth and her German Garden* there is a curious circumstance which has often puzzled me. The case is of an acute, and delightful, and intelligent woman and a chance neighbour of hers, a young man who plays the violin very exquisitely. The lady notes that the virtuoso only plays from the works of Handel, Bach, and Mozart. She asks why, and the young man replies : 'Life is too short for anything but the best ; and that is why I always drink Pilsener.' There is a little discussion on this. The lady asks : 'And Schubert, and Schumann, and Brahms, and Wagner ; are not these great names also the best ?' To which question the philosopher and artist replies briefly and finally : 'No,' and retreats to play more Bach or to drink more Pilsener, as the case may be.

Now it is not the musical question that concerns us here, though, by the way, I am with the amateur of the violin. The point is that the lady of the story is genuinely puzzled by the young man and slightly contemptuous of him. She admits that he plays the very best music in the very best manner, that he enters into the very souls of the great creative artists whom he interprets ; and therefore she is distressed to think that such a man should trouble himself at all about what sort of beer he drinks. What has an artist to do with beer ? she asks herself, and concludes, a little contemptuously, as I have remarked, that human nature has always its weaknesses, its rather pitiable addictions to low, gross appetites.

And the odd thing is that at least ninety people out of a hundred would agree with her. 'No good man, no great man, no artist cares twopence about meat and drink': that would be the general verdict.

Which is interesting ; since the truth is the direct contrary. Dr. Johnson, who was both good and great, said very well—I quote without book—'I mind my belly ; and I take it that he who does not mind his belly will mind little else.' Handel, it will be remembered, once ordered a tavern dinner for two.

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He came at the time appointed, sat down at the board, and ordered the meal to be served. The landlord craved his honour's pardon, but thought his honour had expected company.

'I am the company,' said Handel, and devoured the dinner for two with great enjoyment. Here, I confess, we have a tinge of Teutonic greediness and love of gross bulk, rather than delicacy, in food. But, at all events, the instance shows that the good and great composer of 'Acis and Galatea,' of the most exquisite vocal music ever written, was a lover of good and great feasts. It was the best port, a port whose father grape grew fat in Lusitanian summers, which Tennyson bids the plump head waiter at the Cock bring him. And in the Carthusian Order, where the Rule is of the strictest, the one meal of the day, though meatless, is all exquisite of its kind.

These are but concrete instances put in as examples of the self-evident principle, that those who aim at perfection aim at perfection in all things. Their desire is for the best : for the best music, and the best drink, and the best meat that are to be had. I am sure that the dinner for two that Handel enjoyed so heartily was the best of its kind : woe to the landlord who put before the composer of 'Love in her eyes sits playing,' and 'Where'er you walk,' rank mutton, watery fish, or stringy beef. I know of no more charming illustration of this principle of which we are speaking than the anecdote of the Lady Superior and the chocolate, as told by the author of the immortal work which I here have the honour of introducing.

'More than fifty years ago,' writes Brillat-Savarin, 'Mme d'Anstrel, Superior of the Convent of the Visitation at Belley, spoke to me as follows : "Monsieur," she said, "when you wish to drink good chocolate, let it be made the day before in a porcelain coffee-pot, and left overnight. The night's rest concentrates it, and makes it velvet to the tongue. The good God cannot frown upon this small luxury, for He is Himself all excellence."'

And there you have the root of the matter. The religious lady knew that nastiness, the second-rate, can never be acceptable to the Most High ; and it is extraordinary to me that any other doctrine than this should be held by anyone who is devout, or even decent. It is not luxury in the ordinary sense of the word that is demanded. I have had luxurious meals at the Hôtel Splendide and the Hôtel Glorieux which were costly rubbish. I have lunched on bread, and cheese, and beer

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to admiration ; but then the bread, and cheese, and beer were all the best of their kind : a good Caerphilly cheese is better than a raw, unripe, stinging Stilton ; as decent, honest beer—if you can get any—is infinitely above third-rate champagne. And here, by the way, there occurs to me another dish in the concoction of which it is wise to follow the counsel of the Superior as to chocolate. This dish is curry, a word which represents for most of us the most nauseous of all the massacres which go to form the English Cookery of our doleful day. Indeed, I have known cooks, excellent in most things, come to dismal grief over their curries, which ought rather to be called Messpots ; the word indicating the nature of the dish, and gently hinting that some of its ingredients are of Eastern origin. And in case anybody should wish to know the true English receipt for a Messpot, I give it as follows :

Take the remains of the leg of mutton ; cut it into chunks, carefully including the fat, the gristle, and above all the outer skin. You cannot get the veritable and rammy rankness so admired at our honest British boards unless you include the skin. And, besides, this method saves a lot of trouble and fine work, as Mrs. Prig called it. Put the chunks of cold mutton into a pot, and add about a pint and a half of water ; also pepper and salt. Bring to the boil, and let boil pretty briskly for an hour. Then throw in a handful of curry powder, and let this merry mixture race away as it pleases, while you boil rice till it becomes a solid, sticky mass, and a very fair substitute for modelling clay. Pour out the Messpot into a shallow dish ; the solids will be very hard, the liquid will be a profuse, thin, greasy, greenish-yellow matter, of an acrid, raw, burning flavour. Make a ring of the sticky rice round the dish, and serve.

Verdict of the dinner table :

“ What excellent curries Cook makes ! ”

But as for curry, as distinguished from Messpot, the way is this. You are confronted by the same cold leg of mutton that found the confectioner of Messpot ready and unperturbed. But to the thinking man or woman, a cold leg of mutton constitutes one of the graver emergencies and difficulties of life. No decent human being regards cold mutton, in itself, as a possible article of diet. It is, emphatically, unfit for human consumption. Hashes and minces are seldom satisfactory, unless great art is used, unless the mutton is of the very choicest.

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The cold-mutton flavour is apt to pierce through all disguises ; and it is a very horrible flavour.

The only safe solution of the cold-mutton difficulty is a curry, a real one. This is the manner of it :

Cut the cold mutton into chunks of about the size of a walnut. Most scrupulously reject all fat, all gristle, all skin, whether external or internal. Place these purified chunks on a plate. Pour upon them a recognised brand of curry powder—Ven-catachellum is a man worthy of trust. Roll the pieces of meat in the powder, so that every scrap is completely vested in a yellow-brown robe. Then fry (*faites sauter*) the meat in good butter, till all has become a rich, dark, unctuous brown, with gleams of gold piercing through here and there. Place the meat in a casserole. Slice onions fine, and so that the bulk of onion is equal to the bulk of meat. Fry till the onions are golden brown. Add them to the meat in the casserole ; add two saltspoonfuls of salt. Pour in somewhat less than half a pint of good stock. Stir all together and bring the mixture to the boil. Then gently ease and adjust the casserole on the hot plate, so that two slow and unctuous bubbles are all that are to be observed ; and let this process continue for two clear hours. Then allow the mixture to cool. Let it meditate all the night, in the manner of the Superior's chocolate. An hour and a quarter before next day's dinner, take away superfluous butter on the surface, and bring the casserole again to the boil ; again let that which is within utter its two solemn bubbles for an hour. Serve the CURRY in a dish alone ; in another dish let there be rice so boiled that every grain retains its individuality. Help the rice first ; on it place the portions of curry, with its juice ; creamy, velvety, exquisite. *Lætabuntur omnes.*

But to our main text : the art of good eating and good drinking : it is not a little curious that in this matter as in many others, science—the science falsely so called of our day—has fairly and completely reduced itself to the ridiculous. For I believe that when certain premisses or sets of premisses, carried out to their legitimate and necessary conclusions, result in evident and monstrous absurdity, we are forced to determine that the premisses themselves are false, monstrous, and absurd. If a mathematical assumption, being worked out, testifies that twice two makes 120, then we safely declare the original assumption to be nonsensical and false. So with the 'science' of the day as applied to meat and drink. It has its jargon of proteids

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and carbohydrates and I know not what rubbish besides. It has its doctrines, which might be valid if the human body were a test-tube, without mind, emotions, or sensations. And thus this science of ours comes to the conclusion that we should all be infinitely better if we lived on a diet of raw, shredded carrots and turnips, with a nut or two now and then by way of dessert. In a word, Harley Street, or some of its most eminent representatives, would send us back to sheer, sullen savagery, to the ape-like creatures who lived like the brutes, before the discovery of fire. Harley Street, it may be remembered, had a precursor of later date than the age of the tree-dwellers. Mr. Squeers, of Dotheboys Hall, anticipated the very latest scientific doctrines of diet. When a boy was ill and couldn't fancy his food, he was turned into a neighbour's turnip-field, or, if it were a very delicate case, into a carrot-field and a turnip-field alternately, and bidden to eat as much as he would. But Dickens never dreamed that the Squeers Diet would be solemnly approved as the proper regimen of man by qualified physicians. However, the *reductio ad absurdum* is as complete, I take it, as it well can be. The doctor is the last person that we shall consult when we set out to order dinner. Human nutrition has very little, if anything, to do with the calories-proteid-carbohydrate rubbish. It is an extraordinary complex: on the one hand, there is good food, dressed and cooked according to the rules of art; on the other, a whole tangle of fancies, whims, tastes, imaginations, idiosyncrasies. The service is most important: fine porcelain, fine silver, fine glass, lamps that are bright but not too bright, come to the account; flowers, as Mrs. Gamp would put it, may do a world of good; soft music through a half-closed door may be worth more than a wilderness of pep-tones. And furthermore, the company must be congenial. The Wise King was no vegetarian—else he were not wise—but nothing can be truer than his dictum that a dinner of herbs where love is, is far better than a stalled ox and strife. The most exquisite dishes would become little better than poison to you, if you suddenly recognised in the man opposite your bitterest enemy. The *Vol-au-vent à l'Archevêque* would choke you as you tasted it; the silkiest Clarets would distil themselves into corrosive acids in your gullet. This is the real science of the great art of eating and drinking, as distinct from the sham science of 'A well-known Physician,' who writes in the newspapers.

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I remember, thirty-eight years ago, that I was dining very tolerably well and enjoying my dinner at an hotel in Exeter. It was towards the end of the meal—as, luckily, it fell out—that I caught some remarks that the gentleman opposite to me was making. He had been travelling on the Continent, it appeared ; he had visited Cologne.

‘Some people,’ he said, ‘pretend to admire the Cathedral there. I call it an awful waste of money. It would have been much better if they had built a decent iron church, and given the rest of the money to the poor.’

My dinner automatically came to an end. I put down my fork. Another morsel would have choked me. The monstrous and insufferable villainy and folly of the scoundrel opposite made eating quite out of the question. It is true that the fellow’s next sentence made it clear that he ‘travelled’ in wholesale ironmongery, and was hoping for orders for an iron cathedral ; but it was too late. The cream cheese looked attractive, but I did not dare to touch it. It would have poisoned me. No decent person can enjoy food in the company of Judas.

It is melancholy to read Brillat-Savarin and to compare his survey of meat and drink in his age with the prospect before us to-day. It would have been difficult in the France of a hundred years ago to procure a really bad dinner. It is almost impossible in the England of to-day to procure a really good one ; that is, of the English kind. It is not long since I dined with a friend at one of the stateliest of London clubs : I thought I should find perfection. What I found was a meal that was in many respects tolerable in the simple way ; the sort of meal which any sensible person would praise if he were a guest at the farmer’s ordinary, in an old-fashioned country town. But there was one exception to this very modest standard of excellence. I hope that there are many of us still spared who know what ‘Yorkshire’ can be : that fair champaign of rich, golden brown, with Etna and Vesuvius summits lifted up from it, where the brown has burnt almost to blackness : the delight to the palate at the mixture of the abstract and the concrete, as the tongue now encounters airy bubbles, and now touches matters which are consistent and delicious. But at the Club ! There was a sodden segment of dank stuff, disagreeable to the eye, disgusting to the taste. They were not ashamed to call it Yorkshire Pudding.

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And if they do these things in the green tree—— There may be in the wilderness of London stout old taverns, chop-houses, coffee-houses, still left, where decent English food may still be obtained ; but if such places exist, they must be reckoned among the many secrets of the multitudinous streets. I know them not ; I cannot find them. American friends of mine often ask me where they can find the famous chops, the noble steaks, the illustrious roast-beef of Old England. I bow my head in shame and confess that I do not know. The lamb and mutton of the old-established chop-house come from New Zealand, the roast-beef is the oh ! the chilled beef of old Argentine, and oh ! the old Argentinish chilled beef. The pork comes from China. The beefsteak-and-kidney pudding is humbug, and nauseous humbug too. I had beefsteak pie a few weeks ago at a club which prides itself on this sort of cooking : it would have disgraced a carman's 'Pull-up.' Roasting is almost obsolete ; and at one of the most famous 'Old English' resorts in London, where they do roast, they hang beef, veal, and lamb on one spit, and baste all three joints in the common gravy. I was once in the kitchen of a very exclusive, highly expensive hotel in the western part of London. The proprietress pointed out to me with pride the joint of beef, actually being roasted on the spit. Very well ; but I looked round and saw some parsley ready to be chopped up. It was, I should think, five days old from the pulling : it was yellow with age. As for the floury potato, served in its rough but honest jacket, the potato that William used to squeeze in a napkin till the delicious whiteness within gushed out to gladden stout British hearts : that potato is as the fruits of the Hesperides ; not for mortal lips.

I hope the publication of Brillat-Savarin's great book may light a fire in the land, a fire such as Pascal kindles in the Old Port of Marseilles when he roasts his partridges at the flame of the branches of the vine.

ARTHUR MACHEN.

Biographical Note

JEAN ANTHELME BRILLAT-SAVARIN, or, as he sometimes styled himself, as Chevalier of the Empire, Brillat de Savarin, was born on April 2, 1755, at Belley, the chief town of the district of Bugey, in the modern Department of the Ain.

Coming of an old and respected family of provincial lawyers, who were seigneurs, besides, of a small estate, he was himself called to the bar, and had acquired a sufficient reputation to be sent to the National Assembly of 1789, as Deputy for Bugey and the adjoining Valromey. In this capacity he displayed moderate views, and spoke against the institution of juries and the abolition of the death penalty, two measures which at that early stage of the Revolution were advocated by the extremists. Thereafter he remained in Paris as President of the Tribunal of the Ain, and Counsellor in the newly convened Court of Cassation, or Court of Appeal.

Both these important posts he lost in the secondary revolution of 1792, when he returned to Belley, and was elected Mayor of the town in recognition of his services. But two years later, when the Terror was at its height, he was accused of befriending certain Royalists, and to avoid arrest and probable execution, 'emigrated' across the neighbouring Swiss frontier to Lausanne. After a short stay in Switzerland, he removed across the Atlantic, and was there reduced to giving French lessons and playing the violin in a New York theatre orchestra.

In 1796 he was allowed to return to France, and obtained the post of Secretary to the Staff of the Armies of the Rhine; only to relinquish it soon afterwards, on being once more offered his former magistracy in the Court of Cassation. And this he retained, through the successive phases of Consulate, Empire, Hundred Days, and Royalty restored, until the day of his death.

Thus, after a full share of vicissitudes, he was enabled to spend the latter part of his life peacefully in the capital, in a prominent and honoured position which nevertheless left him sufficient leisure. In this period he published his only other book, the *Traité Historique sur le Duel* (1819); he was

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an active member of a Society for the Encouragement of National Industries, and subscribed to the Royal Society of Antiquaries of France ; he entertained and was entertained in his turn, frequenting the circle of his beautiful relative, Mme Récamier (his mother had been born a Récamier), and appearing often at the choice dinners given monthly at the Rocher de Cancale by Grimod de la Reynière, the author of the *Almanach des Gourmands* ; and wherever he went, he took notes for the elaboration of his masterpiece. His father's estate he had forfeited in '94, but he was indemnified, and bought another in the same neighbourhood, where it was his habit to spend two months in the year for the shooting. Two of his sisters kept house for him there, for he was unmarried ; and it is recorded of these old ladies that they lived in bed, only appearing downstairs for the duration of their brother's yearly visits.

Brillat-Savarin also wrote, during his latter years, a number of short tales and sketches, couched, so it is said, in the vein that is called in French, *grivois* : which may be rendered, or might once have been rendered, in English, sprightly, but not for young ladies. They were never intended for publication, and accordingly have never been published. But from one of them, entitled *Ma Culotte Rouge*, the following passage, descriptive of the author as a youth, was with the permission of his heirs extracted by M. Lucien Tendret, and printed in his excellent volume, *La Table au Pays de Brillat-Savarin* (Belley, 1892) :

'On one of the hottest days of July, in the year 1778, a young man of twenty-three years old went aboard the diligence which plies by river between Châlons and Lyons.

'He was tall and well made, rather plain than handsome ; yet there was a certain frank and open carelessness in his face which told in his favour, as indeed he has been more than once most intimately persuaded.

'His fair hair was naturally crisp, though now in some disorder after a night's freedom from curling-pins : but it was easy to see that it had been well combed the day before. He wore a large hat, a green coat, a white waistcoat, and red knee-breeches.

'Ladies, I was that young man ; and in glancing thus modestly at the essential part of my apparel, it seems to be that they were far more elegant than the shapeless trousers beneath which now (1820) we all of us, for what we are worth, young and old, foolish and wise, conceal our nullities, deformities, and infirmities. . . .'

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As a pendant to this self-portrait, Balzac records that in his old age Brillat-Savarin was known, for his great stature, as the 'drum-major of the Court of Cassation'; while the engraving from which the frontispiece to the present volume has been reproduced shows him at the age of thirty-four, when he took his seat in the National Assembly.

The *Physiologie du Goût* was completed towards the end of 1825; and the author had seen it printed in two volumes 8vo, anonymously ('*par le Professeur*'), when he was invited by the President of his Court to attend the annual expiatory service held on January 21, at the Church of St. Denis. 'Your presence on this occasion,' wrote the President, 'will be the more welcome, in that it will be the first time you have ever attended.' When the day came, he was suffering from a slight cold; but such an invitation could hardly be ignored. He went to the service: his cold developed into acute pneumonia; and on February 2, 1826, being then in his seventy-first year, he died.

After his death, it was found that he had himself borne the expense of publishing the work which has made him immortal; and all rights in it were ceded to the publisher by his executors for 1500 francs, exactly half the sum fetched at auction by his favourite Stradivarius.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL.—A translation of the *Physiologie du Goût* appeared in 1883, in a small limited edition, under the title of 'A Handbook of Gastronomy' (London: Nimmo & Bain). No other complete translation has been published in England: and the present version, if it is only a pale shadow of the original, may at least claim to adhere more faithfully to the spirit of that original than its above-mentioned predecessor.

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THE FIRST PART

APHORISMS

*made by the Professor for a prologue to his work, and to be
the eternal foundations of the Science which he professes.*

I. The Universe is nothing without life, and all that lives takes nourishment.

II. Beasts feed : man eats : the man of intellect alone knows how to eat.

III. The fate of nations hangs upon their choice of food.

IV. Tell me what you eat : I will tell you what you are.

V. The Creator, who made man such that he must eat to live, causes him to eat by means of appetite, and for a reward gives him pleasure in eating.

VI. Gourmandism is an act of judgment, by which we give preference to things which are agreeable to our taste over those which have not that quality.

VII. The pleasures of the table are of all times and all ages, of every country and of every day ; they go hand in hand with all our other pleasures, outlast them, and in the end console us for their loss.

VIII. Of all places, only at table is the first hour never dull.

IX. The discovery of a new dish does more for the happiness of mankind than the discovery of a star.

X. Drunkards and victims of indigestion are those who know not how to eat or drink.

Aphorisms

XI. From the most substantial dish to the lightest ; this is the right order of eating.

XII. From the mildest wine to the headiest and most perfumed ; this is the right order of drinking.

XIII. To maintain that one wine may not be drunk on the top of another is heresy ; a man's palate is capable of being saturated, and after the third glass responds but dully to the very best of wines.

XIV. Dessert without cheese is like a pretty woman with only one eye.

XV. A man becomes a cook : but he is born a roaster of flesh.

XVI. The most indispensable quality in a cook is punctuality : and no less is required of a guest.

XVII. To wait too long for an unpunctual guest is an act of discourtesy towards those who have arrived in time.

XVIII. The man who invites his friends to his table, and gives no thought to the fare of which they are to partake, is unworthy to possess friends.

XIX. Let the mistress of the house see to it that the coffee is excellent, and the master that the liqueurs are of the first quality.

XX. To entertain a guest is to be answerable for his happiness so long as he is beneath your roof.

Dialogue

BETWEEN THE AUTHOR AND HIS FRIEND

(after the usual compliments)

THE FRIEND : At breakfast this morning, my wife and I ordained, in our wisdom, that the printer should be set to work forthwith upon your *Gastronomical Meditations*.

THE AUTHOR : *What woman wills, God wills*. There, in five words, you have the whole charter of *Paris*. But I am no *Parisian* ; and a bachelor. . . .

THE FRIEND : Why, as to that, you bachelors are as much enslaved as the rest of us, and sometimes to our cost, heaven knows. But here the single state won't save you, for my wife claims the right to be obeyed, on the ground that it was at her house in the country that you wrote your first page.

THE AUTHOR : My dear doctor, you know I am ever on my knees to the sex ; more than once you have praised my submissive ways ; you were even, I remember, among those who said that I should make an excellent husband. . . . And yet there will be no printing.

THE FRIEND : And why not ?

THE AUTHOR : Because, after all my hours of toil and research, I am afraid of being taken, by people who only know my book by its title, for a mere frivolous trifter.

THE FRIEND : You have no reason whatever to be afraid of that. Are not your thirty-six years of public service enough to give you a very different reputation ? And besides, my wife and I are convinced that everyone will want to read you.

THE AUTHOR : Really ?

THE FRIEND : Men of learning will read you to discover the truths which you have only hinted at till now.

THE AUTHOR : It is possible, I confess.

THE FRIEND : Women will read you, of course, because they will see that . . .

THE AUTHOR : Dear friend, I am old, I am deep in wisdom : *miserere mei*.

Dialogue

THE FRIEND : Gourmands will read you, because you will do them justice at last, and give them the position in society which is their due.

THE AUTHOR : Ah, how true it is ! It is inconceivable that they should have been slighted and ignored so long ! Dear gourmands, my bowels yearn towards them as a father's towards his children. They are so good-natured ! They have such sparkling eyes !

THE FRIEND : Besides, haven't you often said your work is the very thing the bookshops are in need of ?

THE AUTHOR : I have said so, and it is a fact, and I 'll choke before I take my words back.

THE FRIEND : Then I need say no more, and you will come along at once with me to . . .

THE AUTHOR : No, no ! An author's path is sometimes smooth and pleasant, but it has its thorny places, and them I leave my heirs to deal with.

THE FRIEND : But if you do that you will be disinheriting your friends, your acquaintances, your contemporaries. Would you dare do such a thing ?

THE AUTHOR : My heirs ! My heirs ! The spirits of the dead, so I have heard, are accustomed to be soothed by the praises of the living ; and that is a kind of bliss I wish to save up for the other world.

THE FRIEND : But are you so sure those praises will reach you there ? Are those heirs of yours quite worthy of such confidence ?

THE AUTHOR : Why, I have no reason to think them capable of neglecting a duty in virtue of which I should excuse them many others.

THE FRIEND : But will they, can they feel a father's love for the child of your brain, or give it an author's fond attention, without which no work can make its first bow before the public gracefully ?

THE AUTHOR : But my manuscript will be corrected and neatly written, it will be fully armed for the fray : there will be nothing left to do but to print it.

THE FRIEND : And what of the chapter of accidents ? Alas, how many precious works have been lost in this way, like that of the celebrated *Lecat*, on the State of the Soul during Sleep, his whole life's work !

THE AUTHOR : Doubtless that was a grievous loss, and I am far from aspiring to be the cause of such regrets.

Dialogue

THE FRIEND : Be sure that heirs have quite enough of other duties to attend to, what with the Church, and the Law, and the Faculty ; and that with the best will in the world they may have no time for the different things which must needs be done before, and during, and after the publication of even the smallest book.

THE AUTHOR : But the title ! And the subject ! And the fun that will be made of it !

THE FRIEND : The single word *Gastronomy* makes everyone prick up his ears : the subject is in the fashion, and the wits have as much of the gourmand in them as anyone. So you can make yourself easy on that score. Besides, can you have forgotten that the gravest personages have given us light reading sometimes ? *M. de Montesquieu*, for example.¹

THE AUTHOR : Why, so he has ! He wrote the *Temple of Cnidos* ; and it can fairly be maintained that a more useful purpose is served by meditating upon what is the most pressing need, the chief joy and principal occupation of all our days, than by recording the sayings and doings of a pair of brats two thousand years ago in the Groves of *Greece*, and how one pursued and the other scarcely even pretended to run away.

THE FRIEND : So at last you give in ?

THE AUTHOR : Give in ? Not a bit of it. It was only the author showing the tips of his ears for a moment ; and that reminds me of an amusing scene in an English comedy, *The Natural Daughter* unless I am mistaken. I will tell it you.²

The play is about the Quakers, and, as you know, members of that sect call everyone thee and thou, wear the plainest of clothes, never go to war, never swear, make a habit of restraint, and above all bind themselves not to lose their temper.

Well, the hero of the piece is a handsome young Quaker, who appears on the scene wearing a brown coat and a plain broad-brimmed hat, and with his hair uncurled : which doesn't prevent him from falling in love.

He has a rival in the person of a fop, who, encouraged by his

¹ *M. de Montucla*, known for his admirable *History of Mathematics*, also compiled a *Dictionary of Alimentary Geography* ; he showed me some fragments of it during my sojourn at *Versailles*. And there is reason to believe that *M. Berryat Saint-Prix*, the distinguished Professor of legal procedure, has written a novel which runs to several volumes.

² The reader [*i.e.* of the original French] will have noticed that my friend allows me to call him thou, but does not reciprocate. The fact is, that my age is to his as a father's to his son's, and that, although he is now a very considerable personage, he would hate me to change to the plural.

Dialogue

appearance, and taking it for a true indication of his character, makes fun of him, abuses him, and insults him : with such success that the young man, gradually warming up, at last flares out and thrashes his impudent tormentor in the most masterly fashion.

When the execution is complete, he suddenly resumes his former bearing, draws a long face, and exclaims in mournful accents, ' Alas, I fear the flesh was too strong for the spirit ! '

So it was with me, and after a very venial lapse I come back to my original determination.

THE FRIEND : It is too late now ; by your own confession you have shown the tips of your ears ; no, the game 's up, and you are coming with me to a publisher's. More than one of them have got wind of your secret already.

THE AUTHOR : You had best be careful ; you will be in my book yourself, and who knows what I might say of you ?

THE FRIEND : What could you say ? Don't imagine you can put me off with threats.

THE AUTHOR : I shall not say that your native place, which is also mine,¹ is proud of having given birth to you, nor that at twenty-four years old you had already brought out a work on the elements which has been acknowledged a classic ever since ; that your reputation, which is well deserved, gives your patients confidence in you ; that your appearance calms their fears, your skill astounds them, your tactful, sympathetic manner soothes them—everyone knows all that. But I shall reveal to all *Paris* (*drawing myself up*), to all *France* (*dramatically*), to the whole world, the one fault which I know you to possess !

THE FRIEND (*earnestly*) : And what is that, may I ask ?

THE AUTHOR : An habitual fault, which all my reproaches have not availed to cure you of.

THE FRIEND (*aghast*) : Tell me ! It is too cruel to prolong the agony !

THE AUTHOR : You eat too fast.²

(*Upon which the friend picks up his hat and goes out smiling, certain that he has made a convert.*)

¹ *Belley*, the chief town of *Bugey*, a pleasant land of mountains, hills, rivers, limpid streams, waterfalls, and gorges—an English garden of a hundred square leagues' extent. Here, even before the Revolution, the third estate had, by the constitution of the locality, the ascendancy over the two other orders.

² Historical. The Doctor whom I have introduced in the foregoing dialogue is no fantastic being, like the *Chlorises* of old, but a genuine flesh-and-blood doctor ; and already all who know me will have recognised *Doctor Richerand*.

PREFACE

THE decision to lay the present work before the public, for their rejection or approval, left me with the simplest of tasks to perform, no more, indeed, than the setting in order of a quantity of material long since gathered together: I had saved it up for an amusing pastime in my old age.

When I came to consider the pleasures of the table, and all that relates to them, I early perceived that something better than a mere cookery-book might be made of such a theme; it became clear that so important a business, bearing so closely upon the health, happiness, and everyday affairs of men, was deserving of broader treatment.

Once this principle had been established, the rest was plain sailing; I looked about me and took note of what I saw, and often at the most sumptuous banquet I have been saved from boredom by the pleasure I derived from my observations.

It is not to be denied that I was forced, by the very nature of my studies, to play the chemist, the physician, the physiologist, and even the scholar in a small way. But I have always refrained from the least pretence of authority; a praiseworthy spirit of curiosity spurred me on, together with a fear of being behind the times, and a desire to be able to hold my own in conversation with men of science, whose company has ever been dear to me.¹

Medicine, indeed, has been my great hobby, almost to the point of mania; and one of my happiest memories is of how I one day went in by the door reserved for the profession, in the company of several members thereof, to attend an address by Doctor Cloquet, and had the pleasure of hearing a murmur of curiosity run round the amphitheatre, as each student asked his neighbour who the

¹ 'Come and dine next Thursday,' said M. de Greffulhe to me one day: 'I will arrange a dinner of scientists or men of letters, whichever you prefer.' 'My choice is made,' I replied: 'we will dine twice.' And twice we did dine, and the literary meal was notably the choicer and more delicate of the two. (See Meditation XII.)

Preface

redoubtable unknown could be who had honoured the assembly with his presence.

And yet I think there is another day which I recall no less fondly, when I exhibited my irrorator before the Administrative Council of the Society for the Encouragement of National Industries : it was practically my own invention, being neither more nor less than the ordinary compression-fountain adapted for spraying scent indoors. I had brought my apparatus in my pocket, fully charged ; I turned on the tap, and a fragrant cloud escaped with a hiss, rose to the ceiling, and fell in tiny drops over the spectators and their papers. Then with delight too deep for words I saw the wisest heads in the capital bow down beneath my irroration ; and I was near swooning with joy when I observed that the wettest were also the best pleased.

Sometimes, when I think of the solemn lucubrations into which I have been drawn by the wide range of my subject, I am seriously afraid of having been wearisome ; for I too have sometimes yawned, over the works of other people.

I have done all in my power to avoid this reproach ; I have only touched the fringe of subjects which seemed to lay themselves open to it ; I have scattered anecdotes throughout my work, many of them taken from my own experience ; I have left out many singular and extraordinary facts which a cool critic might not be disposed to accept ; I have called attention to certain established truths which the learned seem hitherto to have kept to themselves, and made them plain to the popular understanding. If, despite all my efforts, I have not presented my readers with a dish of science that can easily be digested, I shall none the less sleep quite soundly, because I know the majority will acquit me on the score of my intentions.

There is another possible source of complaint, namely, that I sometimes let my pen run away with me, and tend to turn garrulous when I have a tale to tell. Is it my own fault if I am old ? Is it my fault if I am like Ulysses, who had seen many cities of men, and their ways ? Am I to be blamed for including a little of my own biography ? And finally, I would have the reader remember that I am letting him off my Political Reminiscences, which he would certainly have had to read with all the rest of them, seeing that for the last thirty-six years I have occupied a front seat at the passing show of men and events.

Preface

But above all, let no one dare to put me in the ranks of the compilers : if I had been reduced to that pass, my pen would have stopped writing, and I should have lived no less happily in consequence. I have said with Juvenal :

Semper ego auditor tantum ! numquamne reponam ?

and those who know will readily perceive that, accustomed as I am both to the strife of society and the silence of the student's cell, I have only taken the best of what each of the two extremes has to offer.

Finally, I have given myself much private satisfaction ; I have mentioned several of my friends, who will be surprised, I think, to read their names in my book ; I have recalled a number of pleasant memories, and made permanent some which seemed likely to fade ; and as the homely phrase goes, I have drunk my coffee.

Perhaps there will be a single one among my readers, with a longer face than any of them, who will cry : ' What concern is it of mine if . . . What can he be thinking of, to say . . . etc., etc. ? ' But I am sure the rest will call him to order, and that an imposing majority will take my effusions in good part, and make allowance for the sentiment that inspires them.

Something remains to be said about my style : for the style's the man, says Buffon. But let no one think I am about to claim an indulgence which is never granted to those who most need it ; I merely wish to offer a few words in explanation.

I ought to write marvellously well, for Voltaire, Jean-Jacques, Fénelon, Buffon, and later Cochin and d'Aguesseau have been in turn my favourite authors ; I know them by heart.

But it may be the gods have otherwise ordained : and if it is so, this is the cause of the will of the gods.

I am more or less acquainted with five living languages, and thus have at my command a large and motley stock of words. When I am in need of an expression, and cannot find it in the French repository, I take it from the next to hand, and leave it to the reader to translate me or guess my meaning : such is his fate. Doubtless I could manage otherwise ; but I am prevented from doing so by a theory of my own, which I am ready to defend against the world.

Preface

I am deeply persuaded that French, the language which I employ, is comparatively poor in resources : What is to be done in such a case ? I must borrow, or steal. I do both, since my borrowings are not subject to a decree of restitution, and a theft of words is no offence according to the penal code.

My reader will have some idea of my audacity when he learns that I call a man whom I send to execute a commission for me volante (from the Spanish), and that I was determined to Frenchify the English verb to sip, which is equivalent to our own boire à petites reprises, if I had not disinterred the old French siroter, which used to have much the same meaning.

Naturally, I shall expect the purists to call upon the names of Bossuet, Fénelon, Racine, Boileau, Pascal, and others of the time of Louis XIV : I seem to hear them already, making a terrible to-do about it.

And I shall reply, quite calmly, that I am far from decrying the worth of the authors I have named, or of others that I might have named ; but what follows from their example ? . . . Simply this, that having done so well with so wretched an instrument at their disposal, they would have done beyond comparison better with a finer one. For surely it is reasonable to believe that even Tartini would have been a better violinist if his bow had been as long as Baillot's.

It will be seen that I am on the side of the Neologists, and indeed of the Romantics too : for these last are discoverers of hidden treasure, while the former may be likened to explorers who scour the ends of the earth to supply our wants.

This is decidedly a matter, be it said, in which the Northern races have the advantage of us ; and most of all the English : their genius is never at a loss for an expression, but lends itself willingly to the process of coining words or borrowing them. And the result is that our translations, and especially those made from works remarkable for depth or vigour of style, are never more than pale and colourless imitations of their originals.

I remember once listening to a very elegant peroration upon the necessity of preserving our language in the form in which it was

Preface

established by the authors of our Augustan Age. Like a chemist, I passed this work of art through the crucible ; and this is all that was left : We have done so well that there is no need to do better, nor to do otherwise.

Well, I have lived long enough to know that as much is said by every generation, and that the next generation never fails to make light of the notion. Besides, how shall words not change, when customs and ideas are continuously undergoing modification ? If we do the same things that the ancients did, we do them in a different way, and there are whole pages in certain French books which it would be impossible to translate into either Greek or Latin.

There is no tongue but has its birth, its zenith, and its decline ; and all the brilliant phrases that were made between the time of Sesostris and the time of Philippe-Auguste are now no more than monuments of antiquity. The same fate awaits our own tongue, and in the year 2825 I shall only be read with the help of a dictionary, if I am read at all. . . .

I had an argument over this point once with my good friend M. Andrieux, of the Academy. It was as fierce as an artillery engagement : I attacked in good order and pressed him hard, and should certainly have forced him to surrender had he not beat a prompt retreat, which I did not attempt to hinder, because I remembered, luckily for him, that he was responsible for a letter in the new dictionary.

I have a last observation to make, which I have saved till the end because of its peculiar importance.

When I write and speak of myself as myself, in the singular, the reader is to conclude that I am taking part in a conversation with him ; he may ask questions, argue, be sceptical, or even laugh. But when I put on the formidable armour of We, I become the Professor : and then let him be dumb.

*I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark.*
SHAKESPEARE, MERCHANT OF VENICE, I. 1.

GASTRONOMICAL MEDITATIONS



I. On the Senses

THE senses are the organs by the use of which man communicates with his surroundings.

1. THE number of the senses is not fewer than six, namely : Their
Sight, which embraces space, and, through the medium of Number

light, reveals the existence and colour of the bodies which surround us ;

Hearing, which through the medium of the air receives the vibrations set up by noisy or sonorous bodies ;

Smell, which enables us to discern the odours which certain bodies exhale ;

Taste, by means of which we approve the sapidity and esculence of things ;

Touch, which determines the consistency and surface of bodies ;

And lastly, the sense of *physical desire*, which brings the two sexes together, and procures the reproduction of the species.

It is astonishing to observe that this important sense was

Gastronomical Meditations

scarcely recognised before the time of *Buffon*, having been confounded until then with the preceding one of touch, or rather included as a part of it.

The truth is, however, that the two have nothing in common : the organism of the sixth sense is as complete as are the mouth or eyes ; and it has this peculiarity, that although it exerts an equal influence upon either sex, they must be joined together before the end of nature can be attained. And if taste, on which the preservation of the individual depends, is indisputably one of the senses, a place must surely be found among them for that which brings about the preservation of the species.

Let us grant then to the sixth sense that *sensual* position which so clearly belongs to it, and bequeath to our heirs the responsibility of paying due respect to its rank.

Action of
the Senses

2. IF we may be allowed to go back, in imagination, to the earliest moments of the history of the human race, it is also allowable to fancy that the first sensations of man were purely direct, that is to say, that he saw without precision, smelt without selection, ate without discernment, and was brutal in love.

But all these sensations have a common centre in the soul, the special attribute of man and the ever active cause of perfectibility ; and in the soul of man they were revolved, and weighed together, and their worth considered ; and soon all the senses were made to help one another, for the use and benefit of the sensitive ego, or, which is the same thing, the individual.

Thus touch was employed to correct errors of sight ; sound, by the instrument of the spoken word, became the interpreter of every sentiment ; sight and smell gave added powers to taste ; hearing compared sounds and was able to judge distance ; and the influence of desire was felt by all the senses.

The stream of time, flowing onward over the human race, has brought new perfections without end, the cause of which, almost imperceptible but continually at work, will be found in the insatiable claims of our senses to be agreeably occupied.

Thus sight gave birth to painting, sculpture, and all artificial spectacles ;

Sound, to melody, harmony, the dance, and music in all its branches and methods of execution ;

Smell, to the discovery, cultivation, and use of perfumes ;

I. On the Senses

Taste, to the growth, selection, and preparation of everything capable of being turned into food ;

Touch, to all the arts and to every form of skilled labour and industrialism ;

Physical desire, to all that can prepare for or embellish the union of the sexes, and since the days of *Francis the First*, to romantic love, coquetry, and fashion ; especially coquetry, which was born in *France* and has no name in other tongues, so that even now it is for lessons in *coquetterie* that the choicest spirits from abroad come daily to the capital of the world.

Remarkable as this proposition may appear at first sight, it may easily be verified ; for it would be impossible to discourse intelligibly upon those three essential diversions of society, as at present constituted, in any of the languages of antiquity.

I had composed a dialogue on the subject, which might not have been without its attractions ; but I have suppressed it, in order to give my readers the pleasure of making one up for themselves ; they will find a whole evening all too short for such a display of their own wit and learning.

We said above that the sense of physical desire had invaded the organs of all the other senses : its influence upon the sciences has been no less profound, for a close examination will show that all the most delicate and ingenious achievements of science are due to desire, that is to say, to the hope or determination of one sex to be united with the other.

Such then, in reality, is the genealogy of the sciences, not excepting the most abstruse ; they are simply the immediate result of the continuous efforts which we have made to gratify our senses.

3. OUR senses, to which we owe so much, are nevertheless far from being perfect, nor shall I waste time in proving the statement ; I shall merely observe that sight, the most ethereal of them all, and touch, at the other end of the scale, have acquired in course of time a remarkable accession to their powers.

Gradual
Perfection
of the
Senses

By means of *spectacles* the eye escapes, as it were, from the senile decay which afflicts the majority of our other organs.

The *telescope* has discovered stars previously unknown, and far beyond our native faculties of measurement ; it has penetrated to distances so remote that vast luminous bodies are revealed which to our normal vision are no more than nebulous and almost imperceptible spots.

Gastronomical Meditations

The *microscope* has given to us our knowledge of the interior configuration of bodies ; it has shown us plants, and indeed a whole vegetation, whose very existence was unsuspected. We have seen animals a hundred thousand times smaller than anything which can be observed by the naked eye ; and yet these tiny creatures move and feed and reproduce themselves, which presupposes the existence of organs minute beyond all conjecture.

On the other hand, machinery has multiplied strength ; man has turned his grandest conceptions into fact, and removed massive obstacles designed by nature to withstand his feeble powers.

With the help of weapons and the lever, man has put nature beneath the yoke ; he has made her minister to his pleasures, his needs, his lightest whim ; he has turned the surface of the earth upside down, and a puny biped has become the lord of creation.

Sight and touch, with their powers so much enhanced, might well be attributes of some race far superior to man ; or rather, the human race would be very different had all the senses improved likewise.

It is to be remarked that, although touch has so far developed by way of muscular power, yet civilisation has done almost nothing for it as a purely sensitive apparatus ; but all things are possible, and it must be remembered that the human race is still quite young, and that of necessity much time passes before the senses can extend their dominion.

For example, no more than four centuries have elapsed since the invention of harmony, which is surely sublime among sciences, being to sound what painting is to colour.¹

Doubtless the ancients sang to the accompaniment of instruments played in unison ; but their knowledge went no further ; they had no notion of separating sound from sound, nor of enjoying the effect of one sound upon another.

It was not until the fifteenth century that the tonic scale was fixed, the arrangement of chords determined upon, and use

¹ We are aware that the contrary has been maintained ; but there is no support in fact for such a theory.

If the ancients had known harmony, some precise notions in regard to it must have been preserved in their writings ; whereas all that can be adduced is a few obscure phrases which lend themselves to any interpretation.

It is impossible to trace the birth and progress of harmony in those monuments of antiquity which have come down to us ; and we are indebted for it to the *Arabs*, who presented us with the organ, which by making several continuous notes audible at once, gave birth to the first idea of harmony.

I. *On the Senses*

made of the effects produced to extend the range and variety of vocal expression.

By this long-delayed but perfectly natural discovery the function of hearing has been doubled ; it has been shown to include two faculties in some degree independent of each other, that which receives sound and that which appreciates its constituent qualities.

German doctors have even maintained that persons sensible to harmony possess an additional sense.

As for those to whom music is nothing but a medley of confused sounds, it is worthy of remark that they almost all sing out of tune ; and we must conclude, either that their hearing apparatus is so constructed as only to receive short and waveless vibrations, or more probably, that their two ears are not in the same diapason, and their component parts, being of different length and sensibility, can transmit no more than an obscure and indeterminate sensation to the brain ; just as two instruments, each tuned to a different scale and played in different time, could not produce any consecutive melody.

The last four centuries have also seen important advances in the sphere of taste ; the discovery of sugar and its various uses, and of alcohol, ices, vanilla, coffee, and tea, has furnished our palate with sensations previously unobtainable.

Who knows but that touch may have its turn ? There too some happy chance may disclose a source of new delights ; indeed nothing is more likely, for the tactile sense exists all over the body, and is at all points capable of excitement.

4. WE have seen how physical love has invaded the sciences, playing the tyrant according to its invariable wont. Powers of
Taste

The more prudent and temperate, but not less active, faculty of taste has attained the same end, but slowly and with a thoroughness which seals its triumphs.

At a later stage we shall consider its progress in detail ; but for the present we will content ourselves with remarking that whoever has been a guest at a banquet on the grand scale, in a room adorned with pictures, sculpture, mirrors, and flowers, a room balmy with perfumes, filled with soft strains of music, gay with the presence of pretty women—that man, we say, requires no great effort of the imagination to be convinced that all the sciences have been laid under contribution to enhance and set off the pleasures of taste.

Gastronomical Meditations

Ends accomplished
by the
Senses

5. LET us now review the system of our senses taken as a whole ; we shall see that the Author of creation had two ends to accomplish, one of which is the consequence of the other, namely, the safety of the individual and the preservation of the species.

Such is the destiny of man, considered as a sensitive being ; towards this dual goal all his activities are directed.

The eye perceives external objects, reveals the marvels with which man is surrounded, and teaches him that he is a part of a grand whole.

Hearing perceives sound, not only in the form of an agreeable sensation, but also as a warning of the movement of potentially dangerous bodies.

Feeling, in the form of pain, gives instant notice to the brain of all bodily wounds.

The hand, that faithful servant, not only helps man to withdraw out of danger, and protects him on his way, but also lays hold by choice of certain objects in which instinct suspects the property of making good the losses incident to active existence.

Smell investigates those objects : for poisonous substances have almost always an evil odour.

Then taste makes a favourable decision, teeth are set to work, tongue and palate play their savourous part, and soon the stomach begins its task of assimilation.

And now a strange languor invades the system, objects lose their colour, the body relaxes, eyes close ; all is darkness, and the senses are in absolute repose.

When he awakes, man sees that his surroundings are unchanged ; but a secret fire is aflame in his breast, a new faculty comes into play ; he feels that he must bestow upon another a portion of his existence.

It is a disturbing and imperious summons, and one that is heard by both sexes ; it bids the two come together, until they are made one ; and when the seed of a new existence has been sown, they may sleep in peace ; they have fulfilled their most sacred duty, and established the permanence of the species.¹

Such are the general and philosophical observations which I have thought fit to lay before my readers, before proceeding to our special examination of the organs of taste.

¹ *M. de Buffon* has portrayed, with all the charm of the most brilliant eloquence, the earliest moments of *Eve's* existence. Having to treat of a subject almost identical, we have made no attempt to give more than the bare outlines : our readers will easily be able to add the colouring.



II. On Taste

6. TASTE is that one of our senses which communicates the Definition
 sapidity of things to us, by means of the sensation which it
 arouses in the organ designed to enjoy their savour.

Taste, which is roused to action by appetite, hunger, and
 thirst, is the seat of several operations, resulting in the growth,
 development, and preservation of the individual, and the making
 good of losses due to natural wastage.

Organised bodies do not all obtain nourishment after the
 same fashion : the Author of creation, Whose methods are not
 less various than sure, has provided them with different modes
 of subsistence.

Vegetables, at the lower end of the scale of living things,
 absorb nourishment through their roots, which are implanted
 in the native soil, and by the operation of a peculiar mechanism,
 select only such substances as have the property of stimulating
 growth.

Mounting a little higher, we encounter bodies endowed with
 animal life, but without means of locomotion ; they are born

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in surroundings favourable to their mode of existence, and possess special organs for the extraction of whatever is needed to sustain them during their allotted span ; they do not seek their food, their food seeks them.

A third method procures the preservation of those animals which move about the earth, and of which man is incontestably the most perfect. A peculiar instinct warns him that he is in need of food ; he goes in search of it ; he takes up objects in which he suspects the property of supplying his wants ; he eats, and is restored, and so fulfils in life the career which is his lot.

Taste may be considered under three several heads :

✓ In the physical man, it is the apparatus by means of which he enjoys whatever has savour.

In the moral man, it is the sensation aroused in the centre of feeling by the action, upon the organ concerned, of substances having savour ; and lastly, in its material significance, it is the property possessed by a given substance of acting upon the organ and giving rise to the sensation.

It is apparent that taste has two principal uses :

1°. It invites us, by way of the pleasure derived, to make good the losses which we suffer in the activities of life.

2°. It helps us to choose, from the various substances offered to us by nature, those which are proper to be consumed.

In the exercise of this choice, taste has a powerful ally in smell, as we shall see hereafter ; for it may be laid down as a general maxim, that nutritious substances are hostile to neither taste nor smell.

Operation
of Taste

7. It is no easy matter to determine the precise nature of the organ of taste. It is more complicated than would appear at first sight.

Clearly, the tongue plays a large part in the mechanism of degustation ; for, endowed as it is with a certain degree of muscular energy, it serves to crush, revolve, compress, and swallow foodstuffs.

In addition, through the numerous tentacles which form its surface, it absorbs the sapid and soluble particles of the substances with which it comes into contact ; the sensation, however, is not thereupon complete, but requires the co-operation of the adjacent parts, namely the cheeks, the palate, and the nasal channel, especially the last, upon which physiologists have perhaps not enough insisted.

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The cheeks furnish saliva, which is equally essential to mastication and to the binding of the food into a form convenient for swallowing ; they, as well as the palate, are endowed to a degree with the faculty of appreciation ; I am even inclined to believe that in certain cases the gums have a little of the same quality ; and without the *odoration* which takes place in the pharynx, at the back of the mouth, the sensation of taste would be dull and incomplete.

Persons with no tongue, or whose tongue has been cut out, are not entirely deprived of the sensation of taste. With the former case we are familiar in the pages of text-books ; I received some enlightenment concerning the latter from a poor wretch whose tongue had been cut out by the *Algerians* as a punishment for having attempted to escape from their hands, in company with some of his comrades in misfortune.

This man, whom I met in *Amsterdam*, where he gained a livelihood by executing commissions, had received a good education, and it was quite easy to carry on a conversation with him in writing.

I could see that all the loose part of his tongue, as far as the string, had been removed ; and I asked him whether he still found any relish in what he ate, and if the sensation of taste had survived the cruel operation to which he had been subjected.

He replied that what caused him the greatest discomfort was the act of swallowing, which he only performed with considerable difficulty ; that he could still enjoy what he ate, provided that the taste was not too strong ; but that very acid or bitter substances caused him intolerable agony.

He further informed me that punishment by cutting out the tongue was common in the African states ; that it was specially inflicted on persons suspected of being leaders in any conspiracy ; and that there were special instruments made for the purpose. I could have wished for a description of them ; but he evinced so painful a repugnance on the point that I pressed him no further.

I pondered over what he had told me, and, going back to the old ignorant times when the tongues of blasphemers were pierced or cut out, and to the period when such punishment was made law, I felt justified in concluding that the custom was of African origin, and had been introduced by the returning Crusaders.

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We have already seen how the sensation of taste is principally situated in the tentacles of the tongue. Now, anatomy teaches that all tongues are not equally provided with these tentacles ; that one tongue may possess thrice as many as another. This circumstance explains how it is that of two guests seated at the same table, one displays signs of the liveliest pleasure, while the other seems only to be eating under constraint ; the reason is, that the second guest has a scantily equipped tongue, and that the empire of taste has also its blind and deaf subjects.

Sensation
of Taste

8. FIVE or six opinions are extant concerning the mode of operation of the sensation of taste ; I have my own, which is as follows :

The sensation of taste is a chemical process operating through the medium of humidity, as we used to say in old days ; that is to say, the sapid molecules must be dissolved in some fluid, in order to be thereupon absorbed by the nervous projections, tentacles, or suckers, which cover the surface of the tasting apparatus.

This system, new or not, rests on physical and I would even say palpable proofs.

Pure water causes no sensation of taste, because it contains no sapid particles whatever. But dissolve a grain of salt in it, or a few drops of vinegar, and the sensation takes place.

Other drinks, on the contrary, give rise to impressions, because they are simply solutions more or less heavily charged with appreciable particles.

It would be in vain to fill the mouth with particles separated from an insoluble body ; the tongue would experience the sensation of touch, but not of taste.

As for substances which are both solid and savoury, they must be divided up by the teeth, saturated with saliva and the other gustative fluids, and pressed against the palate by the tongue until they exude a juice which, being then sufficiently charged with sapidity, is appreciated by the tentacles of taste, which at last deliver to the triturated substance the necessary passport for its admittance into the stomach.

This system, which will be further developed, easily answers the principal tests which can be applied to it.

For if it be asked, what is meant by sapid bodies, the answer is that they are soluble bodies proper to be absorbed by the organ of taste.

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And if the mode of action of the sapid body be in question, the answer is that it acts as soon as it is in a state of dissolution far enough advanced to allow it access to the cavities charged with receiving and transmitting the sensation.

In a word, nothing is sapid but what is either already dissolved or immediately soluble.

9. THE number of savours is infinite, for every soluble body has a special savour not exactly similar to any other. Of Savours

Moreover, so intricate a process of modification takes place, by reason of the inclusion of one savour in another, or in many others, that it is impossible to draw up a definite scale, from the most attractive to the most intolerable, from the strawberry to the colocynth. No attempt to do so has met with complete success.

There is nothing surprising in this failure ; for it being granted that there exists an indefinite number of series of radical savours, all capable of combination in infinite variety of proportion, it follows that a new language would be needed to express all the resultant effects, mountains of folio paper to define them, and undreamed-of numerical characters to provide symbols for them all.

And so, since no circumstance has hitherto arisen in which any savour could be appreciated with scientific exactitude, we are necessarily confined to the use of a few general terms, such as *sweet*, *sugary*, *acid*, *bitter*, and the like, which are all contained, in the last analysis, by the two expressions, *agreeable* or *disagreeable* to the taste, and which suffice for all practical purposes to indicate the gustatory properties of whatever sapid substance is under consideration.

Our successors will know more of the matter than ourselves, nor can we doubt but that chemistry will reveal to them the ultimate cause and prime elements of savour.

10. THE moment has arrived when, in accordance with my prescribed plan of procedure, I must assign due prominence to the sense of smell, and recognise its important services as an adjunct to that of taste ; for among all the authors who have come under my hand I have found none who seemed to me to do it full and entire justice. Influence of
Smell upon
Taste

For myself, I am not only persuaded that without the co-operation of smell there can be no complete degustation, but I am

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even tempted to believe that smell and taste are in fact but a single composite sense, whose laboratory is the mouth and its chimney the nose ; or to speak more exactly, in which the mouth performs the degustation of tactile bodies, and the nose the degustation of gases.

My system could be vigorously defended ; but as I make no pretence of being the founder of a new school of thought, I simply offer it for the consideration of my readers, and as proof that I have looked well into my subject. Meantime, I shall proceed with my demonstration of the importance of smell, if not as a constituent part of taste, at least as a requisite accessory.

All sapid bodies are necessarily odoriferous, and thus have a place in the empire of smell no less than in the empire of taste.

He who eats is conscious of the smell of what he is eating, either at once or upon reflection ; and towards unknown food-stuffs the nose acts as an advanced sentry, crying, ' Who goes there ? '

When smell is intercepted, taste is paralysed : this is proved by three experiments which anyone may perform with the certainty of success.

First Experiment : When the nasal membrane is irritated by a violent *coryza*, or cold in the head, taste is entirely obliterated ; no relish is discernible in the mouthful swallowed, and this although the tongue remains in its normal state.

Second Experiment : If the nose is held between finger and thumb during the act of eating, the sense of taste becomes strangely blurred and imperfect ; and by this means the most repulsive medicine may be taken almost without a qualm.

Third Experiment : The same effect will be observed if, at the moment of swallowing, the tongue is allowed to remain against the palate instead of returning to its normal position : in this case, the circulation of air is intercepted, and gustation does not take place.

Each of these results is due to the same cause, the lack of co-operation from the sense of smell, the effect of which is that the succulent qualities alone of the sapid body are perceived, and not the smell which emanates from it.

Analysis of
the Sensa-
tion of Taste

II. THE foregoing principles being laid down, I hold for a certainty that taste gives rise to sensations of three distinct orders, namely, *direct* sensation, *complete* sensation, and *reflex* sensation.

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The *direct* sensation is the first perception arising out of the immediate action of the organs of the mouth, while the substance to be tasted is still at rest on the fore part of the tongue.

The *complete* sensation is composed of the first perception and the impression which follows when the food leaves its first position and passes to the back of the mouth, assailing the whole organ with its taste and perfume.

Lastly, the *reflex* sensation is the judgment passed by the brain upon the impression transmitted to it by the organ.

Let us put this system to the test, by observing what takes place when a man eats or drinks.

Whoever eats a peach, for example, is first of all agreeably struck by the smell emanating from it ; he puts it into his mouth, and experiences a sensation of freshness and acerbity which invites him to proceed ; but it is not until the moment when he swallows, and the mouthful passes beneath the nasal channel, that the perfume is revealed to him, completing the sensation which every peach ought to cause. And finally, it is only after he has swallowed that he passes judgment upon his experience, and exclaims, 'Delicious !'

So with the drinker : while the wine is in his mouth he receives a pleasant but imperfect impression ; it is only at the moment when he finishes swallowing that he can truthfully appreciate the taste and detect the peculiar bouquet of each kind of wine ; and a moment must still elapse before the gourmand can say, 'Good, or passable, or bad. . . . *Peste !* but this is Chambertin ! . . . Ugh ! Suresnes !'

It is thus clearly in accordance with principle and following a recognised mode of procedure that your true amateur *sips* his wine ; as he lingers over each separate mouthful, he obtains from each the sum total of the pleasure which he would have experienced had he emptied his glass at a single draught.

The same process may be even more distinctly observed when taste is disagreeably affected.

See this poor wretch of a patient, faced with an enormous glass of black medicine, such as was commonly prescribed by the Faculty in the days of *Louis XIV.*

Smell, faithful at its post, warns him of the repulsive nature of the poisonous liquid ; his eyes grow round as at the approach of danger ; disgust is upon his lips, his stomach has already begun to heave. But the doctor urges him to be brave, he

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pulls himself together, gargles his throat with brandy, holds his nose, and drinks. . . .

So long as the pestiferous brew is in his mouth and on his tongue, his sensations are confused and his condition tolerable ; but with the final gulp an after-taste develops, nauseous odours rise, and every feature of the patient expresses horror and an intensity of distaste which nothing but the fear of death could warrant.

On the other hand, when an insipid draught is swallowed, such as a glass of water, for example, we find there is neither taste nor after-taste : it leaves no impression on the mind ; we drink, and that is all.

Order of
the Different
Impressions
of Taste

12. TASTE is not so richly endowed as hearing, which can receive and compare a number of different sounds at once ; the action of taste is simple, that is to say, it cannot be impressed by two flavours at the same time.

But it may be double and even multiple by succession ; that is to say, that in the same act of gutturation it is possible to experience a second and even a third sensation, one after the other, each fainter than the last ; and these we distinguish by the words after-taste, bouquet, or fragrance ; similarly, when a key-note is struck, the trained ear can distinguish one or more series of consonances, the number of which has not yet been definitely ascertained.

The careless, hasty eater never discerns the second degree of impressions ; they are the exclusive apanage of a chosen few, who by this means can classify, in exact order of excellence, the various substances submitted for their approval.

Subtle and fugitive are those impressions, and the organ of taste is loath to let them go ; the Professors, without being aware of it, take up an appropriate position, and it is ever with neck outstretched and nose to larboard that they utter their decrees.

Pleasure
occasioned
by Taste

13. LET us now throw a philosophical glance over the pleasure or pain of which taste may be the occasion.

We are faced first of all with the application of that sad and universal truth, that man is far more perfectly equipped for suffering than for pleasure.

It is not to be denied that by the injection of acid, bitter, or pungent substances we can be made to suffer extremities of

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pain and anguish. It is even said that hydrocyanic acid only kills so suddenly by causing anguish too acute for the vital forces to support it without extinction.

Agreeable sensations, on the other hand, traverse a scale of far less extent ; and although there is a marked difference between what is insipid and what pleases our taste, the interval is certainly not wide between what is acknowledged to be good and what is called excellent ; for example, in the first category, a hard, dry *bouilli* ; in the second, a piece of veal ; in the third, a pheasant cooked to a turn.

And yet taste, such as it is by the grace of nature, remains the one among our senses, when everything is taken into consideration, which procures us the maximum of delight :

1°. Because the pleasure of eating is the only one which, used with moderation, is not followed by weariness ;

2°. Because it is of all times, all ages, and all conditions ;

3°. Because it recurs of necessity at least once, and may without inconvenience be repeated twice or three times, within a single day ;

4°. Because it can be enjoyed in company with all our other pleasures, or may console us for their absence ;

5°. Because the impressions which it receives are at once more durable and more dependent on our will ;

6°. And lastly, because when we eat, we experience an indefinite and peculiar sensation of well-being, arising out of our inner consciousness ; so that by the mere act of eating we repair our losses, and add to the number of our years.

This theme will be more amply developed in a chapter in which we shall particularly discuss *the pleasures of the table*, and their evolution from the earliest civilised times up to the present.

14. WE were brought up in the comfortable belief that of all walking, creeping, swimming, or flying creatures, man has the most perfect sense of taste. Supremacy of Man

Our faith is in danger of being uprooted.

Doctor Gall, relying upon I know not what investigations, pretends that there are animals in which the gustative apparatus is more fully developed, and proportionately more perfect, than man's.

This is an unwelcome doctrine to our ears, and smacks of heresy.

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Man, king of all nature by right divine, for whose gain the earth was covered and made populous, must needs be furnished with an organ capable of enjoying the sapidity of all his subjects.

The low intelligence of animals sets a limit to the performance of their tongues ; the fish's tongue is no more than a movable bone ; that of birds, for the most part, a membranous cartilage ; in quadrupeds it has frequently a rough or scaly surface, and is incapable of circumflex movements.

The tongue of man, on the contrary, by its delicate texture and the no less delicate membranes with which it is closely surrounded, clearly betrays the sublime nature of its destined functions.

Moreover, I have found it to be capable of at least three distinct movements, namely *spication*, *rotation*, and *verrition* (from the Latin *verro*, I sweep). The first takes place when the point of the tongue emerges from between the lips ; the second, when the tongue makes a circular movement within the space bounded by the palate and the inside of the cheeks ; the third when it curves upward or downward to remove fragments of food lodged in the semicircular canal formed by the lips and gums.

Animals are limited in their tastes : some live on vegetables, others only eat flesh, others again feed exclusively upon grain ; not one of them has any notion of composite savours.

Man, on the contrary, is *omnivorous* ; everything eatable is at the mercy of his vast appetite ; hence, by immediate consequence, he must command powers of degustation proportionate to the normal claims made upon them. Actually, the machinery of taste attains a rare perfection in man ; and to be convinced of the fact, let us watch it at work.

As soon as an esculent substance is introduced into the mouth, it is confiscated, gas and juices, beyond recall.

The lips cut off its retreat ; the teeth seize upon it and crush it ; it is soaked with saliva ; the tongue kneads it and turns it over ; an indrawing of breath forces it towards the gullet ; the tongue lifts to start it on its slippery way, its fragrance is absorbed by the sense of smell, and down it travels to the stomach, there to undergo sundry ulterior transformations ; and throughout the whole operation not one particle, no drop nor atom, escapes its fate of being thoroughly appreciated.

It is this perfection which makes man the sole gourmand in nature.

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His nicety in matters of taste is even contagious, being readily enough transmitted to the animals which he has appropriated for his own use, until they become in a manner his companions, such as elephants, dogs, cats, and even parrots.

If certain animals have a larger tongue, a more developed palate, or a wider throat, it is because their tongue, in its mere muscular function, is destined to lift heavier weights, their palate to compress and their throat to swallow larger mouthfuls ; but by no sound analogy can it be thence deduced that their sense of taste is more perfect.

Moreover, since taste is only valuable for the nature of the sensations to which it gives rise in the centre of feeling, the impression received by an animal is not to be compared with that which is received by a man ; which latter, being at once the clearer and more exact of the two, necessarily implies the superior quality of his transmitting apparatus.

And finally, what more can be desired of a faculty so delicately adjusted that the old Roman gourmet was able to distinguish, merely by the difference in taste, a fish caught between the bridges from one caught lower down the river ? Have we not in our midst to-day men who have discovered the peculiar savour of the leg on which a partridge rests its weight when it sleeps ? And are we not surrounded with gourmands who can tell the latitude in which the parent grapes of any given wine grew ripe, as surely as any pupil of *Biot* or *Arago* can foretell an eclipse of the sun ?

What follows ? Why, that we must render unto *Cæsar* that which is *Cæsar's*, proclaim man *the grand gourmand of nature*, nor be astonished if now and again the good doctor follows the example of *Homer* : *Auch zuweilen schläfert der gute . . .*

15. HITHERTO we have only considered taste under the head of its physical constitution ; and but for a few anatomical details, which no one will be sorry to have done with, we have kept to the level of science. But our self-imposed task is by no means ended, for it is essentially from its moral history that the restorative sense derives its importance, nay, glory.

Accordingly, we have made a careful analysis of that history, and arranged the facts and theories of which we found it to be composed, in such a way as to convey instruction without weariness.

Thus in the chapters which follow we shall show how the

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various sensations, by dint of repetition and reflection, have improved the organ and increased its powers ; and how the necessity of eating, which at first was mere instinct, has become a very passion, and won a marked ascendancy over every department of society.

We shall also describe how all the sciences which are concerned with the composition of things have agreed to classify and set apart those things which affect the organ of taste, and how travellers have moved towards the same goal, by offering to us substances which nature never seems to have intended us to encounter.

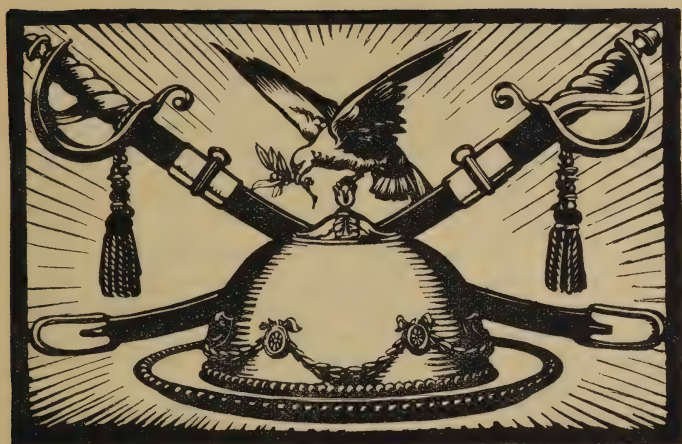
We shall follow in the path of chemistry, and go down into subterranean laboratories, to the end that cooks may find enlightenment, first principles be established, new methods evolved, and hidden causes at last revealed.

And finally, we shall see how by the combined power of time and experience a new science suddenly arose to nourish, restore, preserve, persuade, and console us ; a science which, not content with strewing flowers in the path of the individual, contributes nobly to the strength and prosperity of empires.

If in the midst of our graver lucubrations an amusing anecdote, a happy memory perchance, or some adventure recalled from the annals of a stormy life, should steal to the tip of our pen, we shall let it flow ; our attentive readers, whose number leaves us undismayed, will doubtless welcome a brief respite now and again ; and for our own part we shall be happy to meet them on more familiar terms ; for if they are men, we are convinced beforehand of their intelligence and good humour, and if they are women, they must needs be charming.

Here the Professor, full of his subject, let fall his hand and ascended to the upper regions.

He went back across the flood of ages, and saw in their very cradles the sciences which minister to the gratification of taste. He followed their progress through the night of time, and perceiving that, for the delights which they had to offer, former ages were ever less fortunate than those which came after them, he seized his lyre, and chanted, in the Dorian mode, the historical Elegy which will be found among the Varieties (at the end of the Volume).



III. On Gastronomy

16. THE sciences are not like *Minerva*, who sprang fully armed from the brain of *Jove* ; they are daughters of time, and take shape insensibly, first by the combination of methods learned from experience, and later by the discovery of principles deduced from that combination. Origin of
the Sciences

Thus, the first greybeards whose wisdom caused them to be summoned to the bedsides of the sick, and whose compassion bade them dress the wounds of the afflicted, were also the first doctors.

The Egyptian shepherds, who observed that certain stars, at the end of a certain period of time, returned to the same relative positions in the heaven, were the first astronomers.

He who first made characters to express the simple proposition *two plus two equals four* was the creator of mathematics, that mighty science, which surely raised man to the throne of the universe.

In the course of the last sixty years new sciences have arisen to swell the volume of our understanding, among them

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being stereotomy, descriptive geometry, and the chemistry of gases.

All these sciences are the product of innumerable generations of thought, and the services of printing will preserve them beyond all risk of decay. Nay, who knows but that the chemistry of gases shall in the end win complete mastery over those rebel elements, combine them one with another in proportions hitherto untried, and so obtain substances and results which shall extend the limit of our powers immeasurably ?

Origin of 17. GASTRONOMY arose in her turn, and all her sisters welcomed
Gastronomy her with one voice.

For what could be refused to her who comforts us from birth to the grave, who lends new sweets to love and draws the bonds of friendship closer, disarms hatred, facilitates the conduct of affairs, and offers us, within our brief span of life, the sole delight that, having no aftermath of weariness, remains to cheer us when we are weary of all the rest ?

Doubtless, while the preparing of food was entrusted to hired servants, and the mysteries thereof confined to the lower regions, while cooks kept their business to themselves and only recipes were known to the many, the results of all such labours were but the products of an art.

But now at last, perhaps too late, men of science have taken the field.

They have examined, analysed, and classified all foodstuffs, and reduced them to their simple elements.

They have plumbed the mysteries of assimilation, followed inert matter through all its metamorphoses, and seen how it may come to life.

They have observed the effects of diet, be they passing or permanent, for a day, a month, or a whole lifetime.

They have noted its influence even upon the faculty of thought, whether it be that the mind is worked upon by the senses, or is sensitive in itself without the co-operation of its organs ; and out of all their labours a grand theory has emerged, embracing all mankind and as much of creation as can be made animal.

And while these things were afoot in the cabinets of learning, it became a saying in the salons that a science which nourished men was at least as valuable as that which taught how to kill them ; poets sang the pleasures of the table, and books with

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good cheer for their theme began to be noteworthy for greater depth of vision and maxims of more general interest.

Such were the circumstances which heralded the advent of Gastronomy.

18. GASTRONOMY is the reasoned comprehension of all that relates to the nourishment of man. Definition of
Gastronomy

Its aim is to procure the preservation of man by means of the best possible nourishment.

Its function is the guidance, according to certain fixed principles, of all who seek, provide, or prepare that which may be turned into food.

Gastronomy, in a word, is the motive force behind ploughmen, fishermen, huntsmen, and growers of the vine, to say nothing of the great family of cooks, under whatever title or qualification they may disguise their employment as preparers of food.

Gastronomy pertains :

To natural history, through its classification of foodstuffs ;

To physics, through its examination of the qualities and composition of foodstuffs ;

To chemistry, through the various processes of analysis and catalysis to which it subjects them ;

To cookery, through the art of preparing made-dishes and making them agreeable to the taste ;

To commerce, through its quest for the cheapest possible means of buying what it consumes, and the most profitable market for what it has to sell ;

Lastly, to political economy, through its value as a source of revenue and a means of exchange between nations.

Gastronomy reigns supreme over the whole life of man ; for the tears of the new-born child are for its nurse's breast, and the dying man breathes gratitude for the supreme draught, which, alas, he shall never digest.

Its influence is felt by all classes of society ; for when king meets king, gastronomy is master of the feast, and at the boiling of a single egg, the timekeeper is gastronomy.

The material subject of gastronomy is everything which can be eaten ; its immediate end, the preservation of the individual ; and its methods of attaining that end, cultivation, industry, and commerce, the respective agents of production, preparation, and exchange, and, lastly, experience, which finds out the way of turning the whole to the best possible account.

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Various
Concerns of
Gastronomy

19. GASTRONOMY examines taste as an organ of pain no less than of pleasure ; it discovered the gradual increase of excitement to which taste is liable, and fixed upon a limit beyond which no self-respecting person should transgress.

It also examines the effect of food upon the character of man, his imagination, his humour, his judgment, his courage, and his perceptions, whether he be awake or asleep, active or in repose.

It is gastronomy which determines the point of esculence of every kind of food ; for they are not all palatable in identical circumstances.

Some are best taken before reaching their final stage of development, such as capers, asparagus, sucking-pigs, spoon-fed pigeons, and other animals commonly eaten very young ; some when they have exactly attained their natural perfection, such as melons, the majority of fruits, mutton, beef, and the flesh of all full-grown animals ; some when decomposition has begun to set in, as medlars, woodcock, and pheasant, especially the last ; and finally some, like potatoes and the manioc plant, after their noxious qualities have been artificially removed.

Moreover, gastronomy classifies all these substances according to their several qualities, indicates those which may be eaten together, and by measuring their several degrees of alibility, distinguishes those which should form the basis of a meal from those which are no more than accessories, and those, again, which, without being essential to our well-being, none the less form an agreeable distraction, and have become a necessary accompaniment to any convivial gathering.

It is no less closely concerned with the various liquors which fall to our lot, according to season, place, and climate. It teaches us how to prepare and preserve them, and most important of all, the order in which they should be drunk to secure a gradual increase of enjoyment, up to the point where pleasure can go no further, and abuse begins.

Gastronomy takes note of men and things, to the end that essential knowledge may pass from one country to another ; and thus it comes about that a well-spread table seems an epitome of the world, every part of which is duly represented.

Advantages
of Gastro-
nomical
Knowledge

20. SOME knowledge of gastronomy is necessary to all men, so much does it add to the sum of human pleasures ; its usefulness increases, moreover, in proportion to the social rank of

III. On Gastronomy

the individual, and it is indispensable to persons enjoying large incomes, who entertain in the grand style, whether they do so for political reasons, or following their own inclination, or in obedience to the laws of fashion. For they reap this special advantage from their knowledge, that something of their own personality is revealed in their way of entertaining ; up to a certain point they can watch over those who necessarily possess their confidence, and can even upon occasion direct operations.

The *Prince de Soubise* one day wished to hold a reception ; it was to end with a supper, and he sent for the bill of fare.

His steward appeared at his bedside with a highly ornate card, on which the first item to meet the princely eye was, *fifty hams*.

'*Bertrand*,' he exclaimed, ' what is the meaning of this piece of extravagance ? Fifty hams ! Do you want to regale the whole of my regiment ? '

' No, *mon prince* ; only one ham will appear on the table ; but I shall still need all the rest for my dressings, my sauces, my garnishings, my . . . '

' *Bertrand*, you 're a thief, and I shall not pass those hams. '

' Ah, but *Monseigneur*, ' replied the artist, hardly able to contain his wrath, ' you do not know our resources ! You have but to say the word, and I will take every one of those offending hams and put them all together into a crystal phial no bigger than my thumb ! '

What was to be said to so hardy an assertion ? The prince smiled, nodded assent, and the item was allowed to pass.

21. IT is well known that among men whose way of life is not far removed from a state of nature, no affair of importance is anywhere discussed but at table ; in the midst of their feasts savages decide the question of peace or war ; and without going so far afield, we may see villagers conducting all their business at the inn.

Influence of
Gastronomy
on Affairs

This fact has not escaped the notice of the most eminent men of affairs ; the difference between a hungry man and a man well fed is not lost upon them, and they know that the table establishes a kind of tie between the two parties to a bargain ; after a meal a man is more apt to receive certain impressions, to yield to certain influences ; and this is the origin of political gastronomy. Meals are become a means of government, and the fate of nations has been sealed at many a banquet. We

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propound neither a paradox nor anything that is new, but a plain statement of fact. Read the historians, from *Herodotus* down to our own day, and you will see that no great event, and we make no exception even of conspiracies, has ever come to pass, which was not first conceived, worked out, and set in train over the festive board.

Academy
of Gastro-
nomes

22. SUCH, at a glance, is the realm of gastronomy, a region fertile in all manner of results, and certain to be enriched in days to come by the labours and discoveries of learning ; for it is certain that before many years shall have passed, gastronomy will have its own academicians, universities, professors, and prize essays.

First, some zealous and wealthy gastronome will hold periodical meetings beneath his own roof, where the most eminent theorists will forgather with practising artists, to discuss and examine the different aspects of the science of food.

And soon (for such is the history of all academies) the Government will intervene with laws, subsidies, and measures of every kind, seizing the occasion to offer compensation to the people for all the children made fatherless by the guns, and all the *Ariadnes* to whom the drums of war bring tears.

Happy the man to whom it shall be given to found that academy ! His name will go down from age to age, linked with the names of *Noah* and *Bacchus*, *Triptolemus* and all benefactors of humanity ; he will be among ministers what *Henry IV* is among kings, and his praise will be in every mouth, without any law to enforce the same.



IV. On Appetite

23. MOVEMENT and life are the cause of a continuous wastage of substance in the living body ; and the human body, with all its intricate machinery, would soon break down had not Providence supplied a means of giving it timely warning when its strength is no longer equal to its duties. Definition of Appetite

The means of warning is appetite. By that name we call the first intelligence of the need of eating.

Appetite is heralded by a certain languor in the stomach and a slight feeling of exhaustion.

At the same time, the brain dwells upon objects analogous to its needs ; memory recalls things which have been pleasant to the taste ; imagination seems to see them, as it were in a dream. This condition is not without charms ; and we have heard thousands of adepts exclaim in the joy of their heart, ' Oh, the pleasure it is to have a good appetite, and to know that a perfect meal awaits us ! '

In the meantime, the whole machinery of nourishment is active ; the stomach grows very sensitive ; the gastric juices

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rise ; the internal gases are noisily displaced ; the mouth fills with juices, and all the digestive powers are up in arms, like soldiers only waiting for the word of command before they charge. A few moments more, and spasmodic movements will begin ; there will be yawning, pangs, and hunger.

It is easy to observe each phase of these various conditions in any roomful of people waiting for dinner.

They are so natural that the most exquisite politeness cannot disguise the symptoms ; and hence my aphorism, 'Of all the qualities indispensable in a cook, punctuality is the foremost.'

Anecdote

24. I SHALL illustrate this grave maxim by recalling certain observations made by myself at a dinner-party,

quorum pars magna fui,

and where the pleasure of observing saved me from the last extremity of anguish.

I was one day invited to dinner at the house of an important public official. The invitation card was for half-past five, and at the proper time everyone had arrived, for it was well known that our host liked his guests to be punctual, and had sometimes shown his displeasure when anyone was late.

On my arrival, I was struck by the air of consternation which seemed to reign over the assembly ; people were whispering into one another's ears, and looking out of the windows into the courtyard, and some faces proclaimed stupefaction. Something extraordinary had evidently occurred.

I went up to one of the guests, whom I thought the most likely to be able to satisfy my curiosity, and asked him what was afoot. 'Alas,' he replied, in tones of deepest affliction, 'alas, *Monseigneur* has been summoned to a Council of State ; he left only a moment ago, and who knows when he may be back ?' 'Is that all ?' I answered, with an air of unconcern which effectively masked my true feelings, 'why, 'tis a matter of a quarter of an hour at the most ; some piece of information is required which only he can supply ; they know that this is an official dinner, and can have no reason to keep us fasting.' So I spoke ; but in the depth of my heart I was ill at ease, and could have wished myself anywhere else on earth.

The first hour went by quickly enough ; those who had been introduced sat together, wore out the trivial subjects of con-

IV. On Appetite

versation, and speculated as to what could be the reason of our good amphitryon's summons to the *Tuileries*.

At the end of two hours, symptoms of impatience began to be noticeable ; I detected the exchange of anxious glances ; and the first murmurs of complaint were heard, coming from three or four of the guests, who not having found anywhere to sit down, were in more discomfort than the rest.

By the third hour discontent was rife, and everyone was bitterly complaining. 'When will he be back?' said one. 'What can he be thinking of?' said another. 'This will be the death of me,' said a third ; and every mind was bent on the insoluble problem, 'To leave, or not to leave?'

Another hour, and the symptoms became more pronounced ; arms were stretched, to the great peril of neighbours' eyes ; loud yawns echoed in every corner ; the hue of concentration overspread all features ; and no one listened when I dared to say that he whose absence was the cause of our misery was doubtless the most miserable of us all.

Attention was momentarily distracted by an apparition. One of the guests, who was on closer terms with our host than the rest, penetrated as far as the kitchen ; he came back breathless ; the end of the world was in his face, and almost inarticulately, in muffled tones which were a sort of compromise between fear of making a noise and the wish to be heard, he blurted out : '*Monseigneur* left without giving any instructions, and whatever the length of his absence, dinner will not be served before his return.' He spoke ; and the consternation spread by his speech will not be surpassed by the effect of the trump of doom.

Among all the poor martyrs, the most wretched was the worthy *d'Aigrefeuille*, well known to all *Paris* in those days ; his whole form was one mass of suffering, and the anguish of *Laocoön* was upon his features. Pale, distracted, seeing nothing, he fell back into a chair, folded his little hands across his great belly, and closed his eyes, not to sleep, but to await death.

But death came not. Towards ten o'clock the noise of wheels was heard in the courtyard ; everyone stood up spontaneously. Sorrow was turned to joy, and in five minutes we were seated at table.

But the time for appetite was past. It was too unusual an experience to begin dinner at that untimely hour ; jaws worked, but without the isochronous movements which mark an

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accustomed task, and I afterwards learned that this circumstance was the cause of no little discomfort to some of the guests.

The moral is, that in such a case it is unwise to eat immediately after the hindrance is removed ; a glass of sugar-and-water or a cup of broth should first be swallowed, to soothe the stomach ; and then an interval of ten or fifteen minutes should elapse, or else the organ, being still in a state of convulsion, will be crushed by the load of food thrust upon it.

Mighty
Appetites

25. WHEN we read, in early literature, of the preparations made for the entertainment of two or three persons, and the enormous quantity of food offered to a single guest, it is difficult to avoid concluding that the men who lived nearer than ourselves to the cradle of the world were endowed with appetites far larger than our own.

Appetites, in those days, were held to increase in proportion to the dignity of individuals ; and he whose share of the feast was the entire back of a five-years-old bull would drink from a cup so massive that he might scarcely lift it to his lips.

Certain persons have lived among us in more recent times to bear witness to what may have been done in the past ; and examples of almost incredible voracity are on record, applied, moreover, to the most unpleasant objects.

I will spare my readers a recital of disgusting details, and instead relate two particular feats of which I myself was a witness, and which require no blind faith to be believed.

Some forty years ago I paid a flying visit to the curé of *Bregnier*, a man of great stature, whose appetite was renowned throughout the district.

Although it was hardly midday when I arrived, I found him seated at table. He had already made a clean sweep of the soup and *bouilli*, and to this invariable prelude a leg of mutton *à la royale* succeeded, together with a sizeable capon and a large dish of salad.

The moment I appeared, he offered to have a place laid for me, but I declined, and rightly, as it turned out ; for alone and unaided he easily worked his way through the entire supply, namely, the leg of mutton down to the ivory, the capon to the bone, and the salad to the bottom of the dish.

A large white cheese was then placed before him, in which he made an angular breach of ninety degrees, washing it down

IV. On Appetite

with a bottle of wine and a jug of water ; then he rested from his labours.

What particularly pleased me was that throughout the whole operation, which occupied the best part of three-quarters of an hour, the venerable priest was perfectly at his ease. The huge mouthfuls which he cast into his mighty maw by no means prevented him from laughing and talking, and in fact he made no more to-do than if he had been eating a brace of larks.

It was the same with *General Brisson*, who used to drink eight bottles of wine every morning at breakfast, without turning a hair ; his glass was larger than anyone else's, and he emptied it more frequently ; but you would have said that he did so without thinking, and the business of absorbing two gallons of liquid no more prevented him from jesting and issuing his orders, than if it had been a tumblerful of water.

His name recalls that of another soldier, my gallant compatriot, *General Sibuet*, who died on the field of honour at the passage of the *Bober*, after serving many campaigns as chief aide-de-camp to *Masséna*.

Prosper was eighteen years old, and the owner of one of those splendid appetites by which nature proclaims that she is building up a fine man, when on a certain evening he entered the kitchen of one *Genin*, the host of an inn where the gossips of *Belley* used to forgather to eat chestnuts and drink the peculiar unfermented white wine of the district.

A magnificent plump turkey, golden brown and done to a turn, had just been taken off the spit ; the smell of it would have tempted a saint.

The gossips, being no longer hungry, took little notice of the fowl ; but young *Prosper's* digestive powers were at once aroused ; his mouth began to water, and he cried aloud : ' I have only this moment come from dinner, but I'll wager I can eat the whole of that turkey unaided.'

' *Sez vosu mezé, z'u payo,*' returned *Bouvier du Bouchet*, a stout farmer who was present, ' *è sez vos caca en rotaz, i-zet vo ket pairé et may ket mezerai la restaz.*'¹

Execution began forthwith. The young athlete dexterously detached a wing, made two mouthfuls of it, cleared his teeth by munching the neck of the bird, and drank a glass of wine by way of interlude.

¹ ' If you eat it straight off, I pay for it, but if you pause by the way, you shall pay, and I will eat what is left.'

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Next he attacked a leg, ate it as coolly as the wing, and gulped down a second glass of wine to smooth the way for the remainder.

Soon the second wing followed the first, and disappeared, whereupon the champion, growing more and more animated, seized hold of the last remaining limb, and was about to resume the onslaught, when the unfortunate farmer cried out in dismay : ' *Hai ! ze vaie praou qu'izet fotu ; m'ez, monche Chibouet, poez kaet zu daive païet, lessé m'en a m'en mesiet on mocho.*'¹

Prosper was as good a fellow then as he afterwards showed himself a good soldier ; he granted the request of his antagonist, who, being left with the still considerable carcase for his portion, paid for both fowl and drinks with a good grace.

General Sibuet was always ready to relate this feat of youthful prowess ; he used to declare that he only granted the farmer's request as a pure matter of courtesy, and that he felt perfectly capable of winning his wager without assistance. And certainly his appetite at the age of forty was such as to place the truth of his assertion beyond question.

¹ 'Hey ! I see it's all up with me ; but, *Monsieur Sibuet*, as I have got to pay, at least leave me a morsel to eat.'

I am glad to quote a specimen of the dialect of *Bugey*, in which the *th* of the *Greeks* and *English* is used, and, in *praou* and other similar words, a diphthong which exists in no other language, and the sound of which cannot be expressed by any known character. (See the 3rd volume of the *Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of France*.)



V. On Food in General

26. WHAT do we mean by food ?

Definitions

Popular reply : Food is that which nourishes.

Scientific reply : By food we mean those substances which, being subjected to the stomach, can be animalised by digestion, and so repair the losses suffered by the human body through the wear and tear of life.

Thus the distinctive quality of food consists in the property of undergoing animal assimilation.

27. THE animal world and the vegetable world are those which have hitherto provided food for the human race. From minerals, only remedies and poisons have so far been extracted.

Work of
Analysis

Since the time when analytical chemistry became an exact science, much has been discovered concerning the dual nature of the elements composing our bodies, and the substances which nature seems to have created for the repairing of losses.

There is a close analogy between the two lines of research, for man is in great part composed of the same substances as the

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animals which he eats ; and it was essential to discover in vegetables the affinity which made them, too, capable of animalisation.

At a cost of much careful and most praiseworthy labour we have been able to follow both the human body and the food-stuffs by which it is strengthened, first into their secondary constituent parts, and then into their prime elements ; beyond that point we have not hitherto been allowed to penetrate.

Here it was my original purpose to have inserted a little treatise on the chemistry of food, and to have shown my readers into how many thousandths of carbon, hydrogen, etc., both they themselves and the food which nourishes them can be reduced ; but I was prevented from so doing by the reflection that I could hardly fulfil such a task without practically repeating one or other of the excellent chemical treatises which are already within reach of all who choose to read them. And further, I was afraid of descending to a mere list of barren details ; I have therefore condensed my conclusions within a reasoned nomenclature, with the object of demonstrating the more important results of investigation in terms less complicated and more intelligible.

Osmazome 28. THE most signal service rendered by chemistry to the science of food is the discovery, or rather the exact comprehension, of osmazome.

Osmazome is the essentially sapid part of meat, which is soluble in cold water, as distinct from the surplus parts, which are only soluble in boiling water.

In osmazome lies the principal merit of good soups ; the savoury brown of roast meat is due to the osmazome contained in it ; from osmazome comes the rich flavour of venison and game.

It is found chiefly in full-grown, red-blooded animals, and hardly at all in the so-called white meat of lamb, sucking-pig, chicken, or the wings and breast of larger birds ; and this is why the true connoisseur has always preferred the parson's nose ; the instinct of taste anticipated science.

Moreover, before ever osmazome was discovered, recognition of its properties was the cause of many a cook's dismissal, for tampering with the first *bouillon* ; it was osmazome, unknown by name, which made the reputation of the richest soups, and gave rise to the use of *croustes au pot* as restoratives in the bath ;

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it led *Canon Chevrier* to invent pans with lock and key, that famous *Chevrier* whose Friday spinach was always cooked on the Sunday before, and put back upon the fire every day between, with a new dressing of fresh butter.

Finally, the importance of husbanding this mysterious substance was long ago preserved in the saying, that to make good broth, the pot must only *smile*, an expression which confers distinction upon the country of its origin.

Osmazome, only discovered after being for ages the joy of our forefathers, can be compared with alcohol, which made many generations drunk before it was known that it could be extracted raw by distillation.

Osmazome, after treatment by boiling water, leaves what is properly called extractive matter ; and it is the combination of the two which forms the gravy of meats.

FIBRE is what forms the tissue of flesh, and is visible after cooking. It resists boiling water, and preserves its conformation although stripped of a part of its outer covering. To carve meat cleanly, care must be taken to maintain a right angle, or very near it, between the fibre and the blade of the knife ; meat so carved has a more pleasing appearance, tastes better, and is more easily chewed. Elements
of Food

Bones are principally composed of gelatine and phosphate of chalk.

The quantity of gelatine diminishes with advancing years. At the age of seventy, the bones are only a sort of flawed marble ; and this it is which renders them so fragile, and makes it incumbent upon old people to beware of falls.

Albumen is found equally in flesh and blood ; it congeals at a temperature of less than 120 degrees ; the froth or scum on the surface of boiling soup is formed of it.

Gelatine occurs equally in the bones and the soft and cartilaginous parts of the body ; its distinctive quality is that of congealing at the normal temperature of the atmosphere ; two and a half parts in a hundred of hot water are enough to cause this result.

Gelatine is the basis of all fat and lean jellies, blancmanges, and other analogous preparations.

Fat is a concrete oil which forms in the interstices of the cellular tissue ; in certain animals, such as pigs, fowls, ortolans, and beccaficos, whether through a natural predisposition or by

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artificial means, it reaches extraordinary proportions ; and in some cases, losing its insipidity, acquires a delicate and extremely agreeable flavour.

Blood is composed of an albuminous serum, fibrin, a little gelatine, and a little osmazome ; it congeals in hot water, and becomes a highly nutritious form of food (*e.g.* black pudding).

All the elements which we have reviewed are common to man and the animals which he is accustomed to eat ; it is thus not to be wondered at that an animal diet should be eminently wholesome and invigorating ; for its component parts, being nearly similar to our own, and already animalised, readily undergo a second process of animalisation when they are subjected to the vital action of our digestive organs.

Vegetable
World

29. BUT the vegetable world offers no less variety and resources in the way of nourishment.

Fecula is the perfection of nourishment, when it is unmixed with foreign elements.

By fecula, we mean the flour or powder made from cereal grain, leguminous plants, and certain kinds of root, of which the potato is the most important.

Fecula is the basis of bread, cakes, and the various forms of porridge, and thus plays a most important part in the nourishment of almost every race on earth.

It has been remarked that an exclusively vegetarian diet softens the fibres, both moral and physical. The *Indians*, who live almost entirely on rice, and have never resisted any attempt to subjugate them, may be cited as a case in point.

Almost all domestic animals eat fecula with avidity, and they, on the other hand, are singularly fortified by it, for the reason that it is a more substantial food than the cut hay or growing grass and vegetables on which they are accustomed to feed.

Sugar is no less important, whether as a food or as a medicine.

This substance, which was once confined to the *Indies* and the American colonies, became indigenous here about the beginning of the present century. It has been found to occur in the raisin, the turnip, the chestnut, and the beetroot, especially the last ; so that it is not too much to say that *Europe* could be self-supporting in this respect, and independent of *America* or the *Indies*. This is an example of the eminent services rendered by our science to society, and may well be followed with more extensive results. (See the section on *Sugar*.)

V. On Food in General

Sugar, both in its solid form and in the different plants in which nature has secreted it, is highly nutritious ; and the *English*, who make great use of it as food for racehorses, have found that it improves their staying-power in a remarkable degree.

In the days of *Louis XIV* sugar was only to be found in the apothecary's shop, but it has since given rise to a number of very lucrative trades, as the pastrycook, the confectioner, the sweet-drink manufacturer, and others will readily testify.

Sweet essences are also derived from the vegetable world ; they do not become esculent until mixed with other substances, and are properly to be regarded as seasoning.

Gluten, which is particularly found in cheese, is a principal cause of fermentation in bread ; chemists have gone so far as to declare it to be an animal substance.

There are cakes made in *Paris* for children and birds, and which in some parts of *France* are eaten by grown persons, in which gluten predominates, owing to a part of the fecula having been extracted by means of water.

Mucilage owes its nutritious quality to the various substances of which it is the vehicle.

Gum can be taken as food, when necessity arises ; which is no matter for surprise, since it contains very nearly the same elements as sugar.

The vegetable gelatine extracted from certain fruits, notably apples, gooseberries, quinces, and a few more, can also be used as food ; it is improved by the addition of sugar, but is never so valuable as the jellies made from bones, horns, calves' feet, and fish-glue.

Such food is in general light, emollient, and wholesome ; hence it is rarely absent from kitchen or pantry.

WITH the exception of gravy, which, as we have seen, is composed of osmazome and extractive matter, we find in fish the majority of the substances mentioned above as occurring in the land-animals, such as fibrin, gelatine, and albumen ; so that it may fairly be said that gravy is the dividing line between fasting and feasting.

Difference
between
Fasting and
Feasting

A further peculiarity of the fasting diet is, that fish also contains proportions of phosphorus and hydrogen, that is to say, of the most combustible elements in nature. Whence it follows that ichthyophagy is a heating diet, and that we must admit the

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propriety of the indulgences granted in the past to certain religious orders, whose diet was constantly at war with a vow which they were believed to break with the least provocation.

Practical
Observation

30. UPON this physiological question I shall say no more ; but I must not omit to mention an observation of my own, which can easily be verified.

Some years ago now, I went to see a country house on the outskirts of *Paris*, situated, to be more exact, in a village on the banks of the *Seine*, facing the island of *Saint-Denis*, and mainly consisting of eight fishermen's huts. I was struck by the number of children whom I saw playing there by the roadside.

I expressed my surprise to the boatman who ferried me across the river.

'Sir,' was his reply, 'there are only eight families of us, and we have fifty-three children, forty-nine of them girls and but four boys ; of those four one is mine ; see, there he is.' So saying, he stood up with an air of triumph, and showed me a little monkey five or six years old, sitting in the bows of the boat and enjoying a feast of raw crayfish. The name of that little village is ———.

From this observation, which goes back more than ten years, and from others which I cannot so easily describe, I have come to believe that the effect of ichthyophagy upon the sexes is stimulating, but not attended by the most substantial results ; and my opinion is borne out by the fact that quite recently *Doctor Bailly* proved, by a series of observations extending over nearly a century, that whenever the annual census of births contains a much larger number of girls than boys, the superabundance of females has invariably been due to debilitating circumstances ; and in all probability this is the origin of the jokes which have from time immemorial been made at the expense of the husband whose wife gives birth to a daughter.

Much more might be said on the subject of foodstuffs in general and the various modifications which they may be made to undergo by admixture ; but I hope that what has already been said will more than satisfy the majority of my readers. The others I will leave to consult *ex professo* treatises, while I conclude with two considerations which are not devoid of interest.

The first is, that animalisation takes place in much the same way as vegetation ; that is to say, the flow of constructive

V. On Food in General

matter created by digestion is absorbed in various ways through the sieves with which our organs are provided, and becomes flesh, nail, bone, or hair, even as the same soil, sprinkled with the same water, produces a radish, a lettuce, or a dandelion, according to the seed sown by the gardener.

The second is, that we do not obtain in the organism of life the same results as in absolute chemistry ; for the organs whose function it is to produce life and movement act powerfully upon the elements subjected to them.

But nature, who loves to veil herself at our approach, works her transformations in mysterious, hidden laboratories ; and it being granted that the human body contains chalk, sulphur, phosphorus, iron, and ten other substances besides, it is hard indeed to find the explanation of how all this can be sustained and renewed during a period of years by bread and water.



VI. Specialities

31. WHEN I began to write, my list of contents was ready drawn up, and my whole book complete in my head ; but progress has none the less been slow, because part of my time is devoted to more serious labours.

It has happened meanwhile that certain aspects of the question, which I believed to be recognised only by myself, have been dealt with by others ; elementary books on chemistry and medicine have been placed within reach of the general public, and doctrines which I expected to be the first to propound have become popular ; for example, I had devoted several pages to the chemistry of broth, and the substance of what I had to say appears in several recently published works.

In consequence, it has been necessary to revise that part of my book, and I have in fact considerably reduced it, by omitting all except a few elementary principles, some theories which can bear repetition, and certain observations culled from long experience, which will, I hope, be new to the majority of my readers.

VI. Specialities

§ 1

POT-AU-FEU, POTAGE, ETC.

32. WE apply the phrase *pot-au-feu* to a piece of beef boiled in slightly salted water, with the object of extracting its soluble parts.

The liquid which is left at the end of the operation is called *bouillon*.

The residue of meat, when the soluble part has been extracted, we call *bouilli*.

The water first of all dissolves a part of the osmazome ; then the albumen, which congeals at about 145 degrees, forms a frothy scum, and is ordinarily removed ; then the remainder of the osmazome, with the extractive matter or juice ; and finally, portions of the outer covering of the fibres, which come away under the continual disturbance of the boiling liquid.

To make good *bouillon*, it is essential that the water should come to the boil slowly, to prevent the albumen from coagulating inside the meat before extraction ; and it should boil quite gently, so that the several parts which successively dissolve may be easily and thoroughly commingled.

It is customary to put vegetables into the *bouillon* to bring out the flavour, and bread or dough to make it more nutritious ; with these additions, it is called *potage*.

Potage is a light, wholesome, and nutritious form of food, which agrees with everyone ; it stimulates the receptive and digestive faculties of the stomach. Persons inclined to obesity, however, ought to drink their *bouillon* pure and without accessories.

It is said that nowhere can such good *potage* be obtained as in *France* ; and my own travels have proved the justice of the saying. And indeed, it is what might be expected ; for *potage* is the basis of the French national diet, and the experience of centuries has inevitably brought it to perfection.

§ 2

ON BOUILLI

33. THE *bouilli* is wholesome enough food, readily appeases hunger, and is easy to digest ; but it has little strength in itself, because the meat has lost part of its essential juices in the boiling.

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As a general rule, it will be found that beef so boiled has lost half its weight.

We divide persons who eat *bouilli* into four categories, as follows :

1°. Victims of habit, who eat it because their fathers ate it before them, and hope to be as slavishly imitated by their children ;

2°. Impatient persons, who abhor inactivity at table, and cannot withhold themselves from falling upon the first matter to hand (*materiam subjectam*) ;

3°. Careless persons, whom heaven has not touched with the sacred flame ; to them, all food comes alike, and meals are but part of the day's work ; as the oysterbank to the oyster, so is the table to such as these ;

4°. Greedy persons, who in their anxiety to conceal the extent of their appetites, eagerly cast a first victim into their maws, to appease the devouring gastric flames within them and to pave the way for future consignments.

Professors utterly refrain from *bouilli*, both on principle and because they preach truth from the pulpit, saying, '*Bouilli is meat without its juices.*'¹

§ 3

ON POULTRY

34. I AM a great partizan of second causes, and firmly believe that the whole race of fowls was solely created to fill our larders and enrich our banquets.

And certain it is that from quail to turkey-cock, wherever we meet with a member of this numerous family, we shall find food that is both light and savoury, and agrees as well with invalids as with the man whose health is most robust ; for who among us, after faring by command of the doctor like a very desert father, has not revelled in a well-done wing of chicken, the herald of his recall to social life ?

We have not been content, however, with the natural qualities of the gallinaceous tribe ; art has laid hands upon them, and, under pretext of improvement, condemned them to martyrdom. And now not only do we take away their means of reproduc-

¹ This truth is beginning to penetrate, and *bouilli* is no more found at dinners of any note ; it has been replaced by a roast fillet, a turbot, or a *matelote* [a dish, whether of flesh, fowl, or fish, compounded with red wine and mushrooms].

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tion ; we shut them up in solitary confinement, cast them into obscurity, force them to eat whether they will or no, and so swell them to dimensions never dreamed of by the fates.

There is no denying that this unnatural result is also delicious, and that the tender succulence which makes them worthy of the choicest tables is due to those heinous practices aforesaid.

So improved, fowls are to the kitchen what his canvas is to the painter, or to impostors the cap of *Fortunatus* ; they are served up boiled, roast, fried, hot or cold, whole or in pieces, with or without sauce, boned, skinned, or stuffed, and always with equal success.

Three districts of pre-republican *France* dispute the honour of furnishing the best fowls, namely, *Caux*, *le Mans*, and *la Bresse*.

In the matter of capons, it is doubtful which bears off the palm, and in general each that we eat seems better than the last ; but for pullets, none bear comparison with those of *Bresse*, called *poulardes fines* ; they are round as an apple, and all too rare in *Paris*, whither they never come but in strictly votive baskets.

§ 4

ON THE TURKEY

35. THE turkey is surely one of the prettiest presents which the Old World has received from the New.

Superlatively knowing persons maintain that the *Romans* were addicted to the turkey, that it was served at *Charlemagne's* wedding-feast, and that therefore it is false to praise the Jesuits for this most savoury of imports.

Let us silence such dealers in paradox with a twofold refutation :

1°. The French name of the bird, which, being *coq d'Inde*, clearly betrays its origin : for at first *America* was always known as the *Western Indies* ;

2°. The appearance of the bird, which is clearly outlandish.

A scholar could make no mistake about it.

Nevertheless, convinced already as I was, I have been at some pains to investigate the subject, and here are my conclusions :

1°. That the turkey appeared in *Europe* towards the end of the seventeenth century ;

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2°. That it was imported by the Jesuits, who bred it in large numbers, particularly on one of their farms in the neighbourhood of *Bourges* ;

3°. That from there it gradually spread over the whole of *France* ; and hence it was that in many dialects the word for turkey became and still is *jésuite* ;

4°. That *America* is the only place where the turkey has been found wild and in a state of nature (there are none in *Africa*) ;

5°. That in *North America*, where it is very common, they rear it either from eggs found in the forest and hatched in captivity, or from young birds caught wild ; so reared, it is nearer to its natural state, and retains its primitive plumage.

The case is proved to my complete satisfaction, and I here give thanks to the good Fathers for their enterprise in this matter as well as in another, namely, the importation of quinine, which is called in English, Jesuit's-bark.

I also discovered in the course of my researches that the acclimatisation of the species in *France* was a gradual process. Enlightened students of the subject have assured me that in the middle of the last century, out of every twenty turkeys hatched, not more than ten were successfully brought to maturity ; whereas to-day, other things being equal, the proportion has reached fifteen in twenty. Rain-storms are especially fatal to them. The heavy rain-drops, driven by the wind, beat upon their delicate and unprotected skulls, and they fall dead.

Lovers of
the Turkey

36. THE turkey is the largest of our domestic fowls, and if not the most delicately flavoured, certainly the most savoury.

It has also the peculiar merit of attracting all classes of society.

When the ploughman and the vine-dresser make merry on long winter evenings, what do we see roasting before a brilliant fire in the kitchen, the humble kitchen which is also a dining-room ? A turkey.

When the hard-worked artisan invites his friends to celebrate a rare and precious holiday, what dish will surely crown the feast ? A turkey, stuffed with sausage-meat or Lyons chestnuts.

And in the high places of gastronomy, at those choice gatherings where politics give way to dissertations upon taste, what is the cause of fondest expectation, the chief lure of the second course ? A truffled turkey ! . . . And it is written in

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my secret memoirs that its potent juices have not seldom set features eminently diplomatic in a glow.

37. THE importation of turkeys has been the cause of important accretions to the public purse, and gives rise to a considerable volume of trade. Influence of
the Turkey
on Finance

By rearing turkeys, the farmer can more easily pay his rent, and his daughters save up enough for their dowries ; for the lieges must be free with their crowns if they would feast upon this foreign flesh.

The financial importance of the truffled turkey deserves special mention.

I have reason to believe that from the beginning of November to the end of February the daily consumption of truffled turkeys in *Paris* is three hundred, giving a total for the whole period of thirty-six thousand turkeys.

The ordinary price of a turkey so prepared is at least 20 francs, which gives a total of 720,000 francs—no mean circulation of wealth. And to this must be added a like sum for chickens, pheasants, and partridges, also truffled, which are displayed every day in the shop-windows, to the agony of those beholders who have not the wherewithal to attain.

38. DURING my sojourn at *Hartford*, in *Connecticut*, I had the good fortune to shoot a wild turkey. Such an exploit is worthy to be handed down to posterity, and I shall the more readily describe it, in that I am the hero of the tale. Exploit of
the Professor

A worthy old American farmer, who lived in the backwoods, had asked me to join him for a few days' shooting ; he promised me partridges, grey squirrels, and wild turkeys, and invited me to bring a friend.

Accordingly, one fine day in October 1794, my friend *Mr. King* and I hired two hacks and set out, in the hope of reaching *Mr. Bulow's* farm towards nightfall, the distance being five mortal leagues from *Hartford, Conn.*

Mr. King was an odd sort of sportsman ; he was passionately fond of shooting ; but always when he had killed his bird, he used to look upon himself as a murderer and give vent to elegies and moral reflections on the fate of the victim ; after which he would repeat the performance.

Although the road was no more than an ill-defined track, we reached our destination without mishap, and were welcomed

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with that quiet but cordial hospitality which is expressed in deeds rather than words ; that is to say, in a very few moments everything possible was done for the comfort of men, horses, and dogs, and in the most gracious manner.

We devoted two hours to an inspection of the farm and its dependencies ; I could describe it all if I wished, but I prefer to introduce my readers to *Mr. Bulow's* four buxom daughters, for whom our arrival was a great event.

Their ages ranged from sixteen to twenty ; they were fresh-complexioned and radiant with health, and there was a simplicity and unstudied grace about them which lent a thousand charms to all that they did.

Shortly after our return from the tour of inspection, we sat down to a most generous meal. There was a superb piece of corned beef, a stewed goose, a magnificent leg of mutton, a variety of vegetables, and at either end of the table two vast jugs of cider, so excellent that I could have gone on drinking it for ever.

When we had proved to our host that we were sportsmen worthy of the name, at least in point of appetite, he turned to the object of our visit ; he described, as best he could, the spots where we might expect to find game, the best landmarks to guide us on our way back, and the situation of farm-houses where we could obtain refreshment.

In the meantime the young ladies had made ready some excellent tea, of which we drank more than a cupful ; after which we were shown to a room with two beds, and soon fell asleep under the influence of exercise and good cheer.

The following morning was far advanced before we set out, and, once past the limit of *Mr. Bulow's* clearings, I found myself for the first time in virgin forest, where the sound of an axe had never been heard.

I went forward enraptured, observing the benefits and ravages of time, the creator and destroyer, and followed with keen pleasure the successive phases in the life of an oak, from the moment when it first emerges from the soil, a two-leaved sprig, to the time when nothing is left but a long, dark stain, the very dust of its heart.

Soon, however, at the urgent request of *Mr. King*, I left off dreaming, and we set about our sport. Our first victims were some pretty little grey partridges, plump and tender as could be. Then we brought down in rapid succession six or seven

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grey squirrels, which are highly prized in those parts ; and shortly afterwards our lucky star brought us into the middle of a flock of turkeys.

They flew off at short intervals one after another, making a great commotion, and screaming raucously. *Mr. King* fired first, and ran after his bird ; the rest were all, as I thought, beyond gun-shot, when a straggler rose, not ten paces from the clearing in which I stood : I fired, and he fell stone-dead.

None but sportsmen can understand the exquisite satisfaction of that perfect shot. I took that glorious bird and turned him this way and that, feasting my eyes upon him, for a full quarter of an hour, at the end of which time I heard *Mr. King* calling for help ; I ran in the direction of the cries, and found that he only wanted me to join him in the search for a turkey which he swore that he had shot, but which had nevertheless utterly disappeared.

I put my dog in, but he led us into a mass of prickly undergrowth which would have held up a snake, and we were forced to abandon the search ; whereupon my companion lost his temper, and never recovered it until he reached home.

The remainder of our day's sport was not such as to be worth recording. Going home, we lost our way in those boundless woods, and were looking forward in some dismay to a night in the open, when we heard the silvery voices of our fair hostesses and the deep bass of their papa : they had most kindly come to meet us, and our difficulties were at an end.

The four sisters had put on full armour : best dresses, clean new sashes, pretty bonnets, and dainty shoes were so many proofs of their desire to please ; and for my part, when one of them came up to me and claimed my arm, for all the world as if she were my wife, I determined to do all that lay in my power to deserve the compliment.

When we reached the farm, supper was ready waiting for us ; but before attacking it, we sat down for a short time in front of a blazing fire which had been lit for us, despite the mildness of the weather. Most comforting we found it, and our weariness was wafted away as if by magic.

This custom had no doubt been borrowed from the *Indians*, who always keep a fire burning in their tents. Or perhaps it has come down to us by tradition from *Saint Francis of Sales*, who said that a fire was a good thing for twelve months in the year. (*Non liquet.*)

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We ate like starving men ; a generous bowl of punch appeared to crown a delightful evening, during which our host abandoned his earlier reserve, and talk flowed free until long past midnight.

We spoke of the War of Independence, in which *Mr. Bulow* had served as an officer of some distinction ; of *M. de La Fayette*, whose memory grows ever dearer in the hearts of all *Americans*, who never speak of him but by his title, as the marquis ; of agriculture, at that time the great source of prosperity in the *United States* ; and lastly of our own dear *France*, then more than ever dear to me, who was exiled from her shores.

By way of interlude, *Mr. Bulow* would turn to his eldest daughter and say, '*Maria*, give us a song.' And she never needed to be asked a second time, but with a charming air of embarrassment sang the national air of *Yankee Doodle*, *Queen Mary's Lament*, and *Major André's*, all popular songs in that country. *Maria* had taken a few lessons, and in those far-away parts passed for something of a *virtuosa* ; but the chief merit of her singing lay in the quality of her voice, which was soft, unaffected, and very clear.

Next morning we took our leave, ignoring, as in courtesy bound, the friendly insistence of our host. While the horses were being saddled, *Mr. Bulow* took me on one side, and spoke the following remarkable words : ' If there is a happy man under heaven, my dear sir, you see that man in me ; everything around you, and that you have seen in my house, comes entirely from my own property. These stockings were knitted by my daughters ; my animals provide me with shoes, clothing, and meat, and for the rest of my plain but ample fare I need not go beyond my garden and my farmyard ; and, which is greatly to the credit of our Government, *Connecticut* holds thousands of farmers as happily placed as I am, and whose doors, like mine, are never locked.

' The taxes here are almost nothing, and so long as they are paid we can sleep in peace. Congress does all in its power to help our budding industry ; agents traverse every acre of the land to purchase what we have to sell ; and I have now enough money laid by for some time to come, having recently sold a quantity of flour at twenty-four dollars the ton, which is three times the price I have been accustomed to ask hitherto.

' All this comes from our hard-won liberty, and the sound laws by which that liberty is assured. I am my own master,

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and you will not be surprised to learn that the sound of the drum is never heard here, and that except upon the Fourth of July, the glorious anniversary of our independence, neither soldiers, uniforms, nor bayonets are ever to be seen.'

During the whole of our homeward journey I was absorbed in deep reflection : it will perhaps be thought that my mind was full of *Mr. Bulow's* parting speech, but in fact the subject of my thoughts was altogether different ; I was thinking of how I would cook my turkey, and I was worried by the fear lest *Hartford* should be unable to furnish all my wants ; for I wished to raise a trophy worthy of the spoil.

I make a painful sacrifice in suppressing the details of the trouble I was at to arrange a distinguished reception for the American guests whom I invited. It must suffice to say that the partridge-wings were served *en papillote* [*i.e.* cooked in paper], and the grey squirrels stewed in Madeira.

As for the turkey, which made our only roast dish, it was charming to behold, most pleasing to the smell, and tasted delicious. And so, until the very last morsel was consumed, from all round the table came cries of 'Very good !' 'Exceedingly good !' 'Oh, dear sir, what a glorious bit ! (*sic*)'¹

§ 5

ON GAME

39. THE term game includes all animals which enjoy a state of natural liberty in the fields and woods, and are fit to be eaten.

We add *fit to be eaten*, because certain wild animals do not come under the category of game ; such are the fox, the badger, crows, magpies, owls, etc., which we call *unclean beasts* or vermin.

Game is divided into three series :

The first begins with the thrush, and includes, in a descending scale, all the lesser birds.

¹ The flesh of the wild turkey has more colour and a stronger flavour than that of the domestic variety.

It gave me great pleasure to read that my esteemed colleague, *M. Bosc*, had shot turkeys in *Carolina*, and that he found them excellent, and decidedly superior to those reared in *Europe*. His advice to breeders is to allow the birds as much liberty as possible, letting them range the open fields and even the woods, in order to enhance their flavour and bring them nearer to their original condition. (*Annales d'Agriculture*, Feb. 28, 1821.)

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The second ends where the first begins, and includes the snipe, the beccafico, the corncrake, the partridge, the pheasant, and the hare ; this is game in the proper sense of the term—ground game and marsh game, feathered game and furry game.

The third is more generally known by the name of venison, and includes the wild boar, the roe deer, and the other hoofed animals.

Game is a prime favourite at table, being wholesome, highly nutritious, and full-flavoured, and easily digestible by all except persons of advanced years.

But these qualities are by no means so inherent as to be independent of the skill of cooks. Throw a pinch of salt, some water, and a piece of beef into the pot, and you will obtain broth and *bouilli*. Repeat the process, but with wild boar or deer's flesh instead of the beef, and you will be disappointed ; in this instance, the advantage is with the butcher's-meat.

But in the hands of a skilled cook, game is made to undergo a number of ingenious modifications and transformations, and so provides most of the full-flavoured dishes known to transcendental cookery.

A great part of the merit of game is due to the peculiar nature of its feeding-grounds ; the taste of a red Périgord partridge is by no means the same as that of a red partridge from *Sologne* ; and if a hare shot in the flat country round *Paris* makes a dish of no account, a leveret born in the parched highlands of *Valromey* or *High Dauphiné* is perhaps the most savoury of all quadrupeds.

Amongst the smaller birds, the first in order of excellence is beyond all question the beccafico, or fig-pecker.

It grows at least as fat as the red-throat or the ortolan, and nature has further endowed it with an unique and wholly exquisite bitterness, quite irresistible and ravishing to the organ of taste. If the beccafico were as large as a pheasant, it would easily command the price of an acre of land.

It is much to be deplored that this privileged little bird is such a rarity in *Paris* ; not only is the supply limited, but the birds lack that plumpness which is their whole merit, and can hardly be said to bear any resemblance to those of the eastern or southern departments of *France*.¹

¹ In my youth tales were still told at *Belley* of the Jesuit *Father Fabi*, a native of the district, and his passion for beccaficos.

No sooner were they cried in the streets, than word went round : 'There are the beccaficos ! *Father Fabi* must be on his way !' And actually he never failed to arrive on the 1st of September, with a friend ; they proceeded to live on beccaficos until the

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Not many persons know how to eat a small bird : here is the method, as it was privily revealed to me by *Canon Charcot*, a born gourmand, who became a perfect gastronome some thirty years before the word was coined.

Take a plump birdlet by the beak, sprinkle him with salt, remove the gizzard, thrust him boldly into your mouth, bite him off close to your fingers, and chew manfully ; there is plenty of juice to wet the whole organ, and you will taste a delight unknown to the herd :

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.—HORACE.

Amongst game properly so called, the quail is the daintiest and most enticing. A plump quail is equally delightful in taste, shape, and colour. It is an act of barbarism to serve it up otherwise than roasted or *en papillote*, because its flavour is fugitive in the extreme, and, if the animal is brought into contact with any liquid, dissolves, evaporates, and is lost.

The woodcock is another eminent bird ; but few are aware of all its charms. A woodcock is never in all its glory but when roasted under the eye of a sportsman, and preferably the sportsman who brought it down ; then the work is performed in accordance with his own prescribed rites, and his mouth fills with the water of delight.

But over all the aforesaid, and all others too, the pheasant takes precedence ; yet few are the mortals who know how to extract perfection from this bird.

A pheasant eaten within a week of its death is of less worth than a partridge or a chicken, for its whole merit is in its heightened flavour.

Science has investigated the expansion of that flavour, experience has turned theory into practice, and a pheasant cooked at the exact moment is a dish worthy of the most exalted gourmands.

There will be found in the *Varieties* a description of the manner of roasting pheasants, called *à la Sainte Alliance*. The

end of the season ; they were much liked in the neighbourhood, being received everywhere with open arms, and left about the 25th.

So long as he was in *France*, he never missed his annual ornithophilical excursions, which only came to an end when he was appointed penitentiary in *Rome*, where he died in 1688.

Father Fabi (Honoré) was a man of great learning ; he published various works on theology and physics, in one of which he sought to prove that he had discovered the circulation of the blood before or at least as early as *Harvey*.

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time has come for this method, hitherto confined to a close circle of friends, to be made known far and wide for the happiness of mankind. A truffled pheasant is not so good as might be believed ; the bird has too little moisture to anoint the tubercle ; and moreover, the high flavour of the one and the fragrance of the other are incompatible and will not blend.

§ 6

ON FISH

40. CERTAIN sages, with small regard for orthodoxy, maintain that the Ocean was the common cradle of all existing things ; that the human race itself was born in the sea ; and that it owes its actual condition to the influence of the air and the habits which it has been forced to acquire in order that it may live in the unfamiliar element.

However that may be, certain it is that the watery realm contains a vast number of creatures of every shape and size, endowed with vital properties in widely varying proportions, on a system altogether different from that which governs the warm-blooded animals.

It is also certain that at all times and throughout its whole extent, it furnishes a vast quantity of alimentary substances, and that, in the present state of science, it provides our tables with a most pleasing variety of dishes.

Fish, being less nutritious than flesh, more succulent than vegetables, is a *mezzo termine* which suits almost every temperament, and may be allowed even to invalids.

The *Greeks* and *Romans*, though less advanced than ourselves in the art of seasoning fish, nevertheless prized it highly, and carried delicacy to the point of being able to tell by the taste in what waters their fish had been caught.

They kept fish alive in tanks ; and the cruel story of *Vadius Pollio* is well known—how he killed his slaves, for eels to feed upon their corpses : a device of which the emperor *Domitian* strongly disapproved ; he ought, however, to have punished the offender.

There has been much argument upon the rival merits of sea fish and fresh-water fish.

The question will probably never be decided, for the truth is contained in the Spanish proverb, *sobre los gustos, no hai disputa*. Everyone is affected after his own manner ; such

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sensations are too subtle to be expressed by any known character, and there is no scale to determine whether a cod, a sole, or a turbot be worth more than a salmon trout, a well-fed pike, or a six- or seven-pound tench.

It is certain, however, that fish is far less nourishing than flesh, whether because it contains no osmazome, or because, being much lighter in weight, it contains less matter in proportion to its volume. Shell-fish, and especially oysters, provide very little nourishment ; and this is the reason why so many can be eaten immediately before a meal without discomfort.

Until a few years ago, a meal of any pretension ordinarily began with oysters, and it was no unusual feat for one individual to swallow a gross (twelve dozen, a hundred and forty-four). Wishing to know what was the weight of this advance-guard, I went into the matter, and found that a dozen oysters, water included, weighed *four ounces*, avoirdupois ; and a gross, therefore, *three pounds*. Now, I am persuaded that the same individuals, who were in no wise prevented by the oysters from enjoying the rest of their meal, would have been more than satisfied had they eaten a like quantity of meat, though it had only been chicken.

IN 1798 I was at *Versailles* as an emissary of the Directory, Anecdote and had frequent dealings with the *Sieur Laporte*, who was secretary to the tribunal of the department ; he was a great amateur of oysters, and used to complain of never having eaten his fill of them.

I made up my mind to procure him full satisfaction at last, and to that end invited him to dinner.

He came ; I kept him company to the end of the third dozen, after which I let him go on alone. He went as far as thirty-two dozen, taking more than an hour over the business, for the servant was a little slow in opening them.

Meanwhile I was inactive, and as that is an intolerable condition to be in at table, I stopped my guest when he was still in full career. 'My friend,' I said, 'it is not your fate to eat your fill of oysters to-day ; let us dine.'

We dined ; and he acquitted himself with the vigour and address of a man who had been fasting.

41. THE ancients extracted two very choice sauces from fish, *Muria* and *Garum* namely, *muria* and *garum*.

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The first was simply brine of tunny-fish, or, to speak more exactly, the liquid substance drawn from that fish by application of salt.

About *garum*, which was costlier, little is nowadays certainly known. It is said to have been obtained by pressure from the soused entrails of mackerel or scomber ; but if this were so, there would be no apparent reason for its high price. There are some grounds for believing it to have been a foreign sauce, and it may have been neither more nor less than *soy*, which we nowadays import from *India*, and which is known to be an extract from fish fermented with mushrooms.

Certain races are forced by their geographical position to live almost entirely upon fish ; they also feed their cattle upon it—a strange diet for animals, but to which habit has inured them—and even use it as manure in their fields ; the surrounding sea, meantime, keeps them plentifully supplied for all these purposes.

It has been remarked that such people are less courageous than the flesh-eating races ; they are pale-complexioned, which is by no means surprising, because the component elements of fish are of a nature to augment the lymph rather than to strengthen the blood.

Also remarkable are the many instances of longevity among ichthyophagous nations ; whether because their relatively light and unsubstantial diet saves them from the evils of plethora, or because the juices of fish, being designed by nature solely for the formation of fish-bone and gristle, have the effect upon human beings of retarding that solidification of all parts of the body, which finally and inevitably becomes the cause of natural death.

However it may be, fish, in the hands of a skilful cook, can become an inexhaustible source of gustatory delight ; it is served up whole and in slices, boiled, fried in oil or wine, hot or cold, and always with the happiest results ; but it is never more welcome than when it appears in the guise of a *matelote*.

Although this stew forms the staple diet of bargemen, and is only brought to perfection in riverside taverns, it is nevertheless by them invested with unsurpassable virtues ; and ichthyophilists never see it without giving voice to their rapture, some praising its clean, wholesome taste, some the presence therein of certain rare qualities, and others because it is possible to

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go on eating it almost indefinitely without fear of surfeit or indigestion.

Analytical chemistry has been employed to investigate the effects of a fish diet upon the animal economy, and definite proof has been obtained that it acts powerfully upon the sixth sense, and arouses the instinct of reproduction in either sex.

The effect being proved, two immediate causes were ascertained, which, indeed, had long been practically recognised, namely :

1°. Certain ways of preparing fish, with seasoning of a clearly stimulating nature, such as caviare, red herring, soused tunny-fish, cod, stock-fish, and others ;

2°. The different juices contained in fish, which are highly inflammable and become rancid on digestion.

Closer analysis has revealed a third and even more potent cause, namely, the presence of phosphorus, which occurs already formed in the milt or soft roe, and never fails to appear on decomposition.

Doubtless these physical truths were unknown to the ecclesiastical authorities who imposed the quadragesimal fast on certain monkish communities, such as the Carthusians, the Recollets, the Trappists, and the Barefoot Carmelites of the reformed order of *Saint Theresa* ; for it cannot be supposed that they deliberately set out to make the observance of that most anti-social vow of chastity still more difficult.

No doubt under such conditions famous victories were won, and the rebel senses firmly quelled ; but what falls too, and what defeats ! It must needs be something more than mere gossip which invests a religious order with a reputation like that of *Hercules* among the daughters of *Danaus*, or *Maréchal de Saxe* with *Mlle Lecouvreur*.

For the rest, they might have found enlightenment in a tale not new in their day, since it has come to us from the Crusades.

Sultan Saladin, wishing to find out to what lengths the dervishes could carry continence, confined two within his palace, and for a space of time caused them to be fed on meats of much succulence.

Soon all trace of the severities which they had been wont to practise upon themselves was lost, and their skin began to be well filled again.

Being so conditioned, two odalisques of surpassing loveliness were given to them, to be their companions ; but all the skill

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and persistence of their attacks was wasted, and the two saints emerged from their soft ordeal as pure as the diamond of *Vizapoor*.

Still the Sultan kept them in his palace, and to celebrate their triumph caused them to be no less carefully nourished than before, but now on fish alone.

And when a few days had passed, they were exposed anew to the twin might of youth and beauty ; but this time nature prevailed, and the too happy cenobites succumbed . . . most marvellously.

In the present state of our information it is probable that, were the course of things to bring some new monkish order into being, the Superiors charged with the drawing up of rules for them would adopt a diet more favourable to the accomplishment of their duties.

Philosophi-
cal Reflec-
tion

42. FISH, taken collectively in all its species, is to the philosopher an endless source of meditation and surprise.

The varied forms of these strange creatures, the senses which they lack, and the limited powers of those which they possess, the influence of the peculiar surroundings in which they live and breathe and move, all combine to extend the range of our ideas, and reveal the infinite modifications which may arise from matter, movement, and life.

For myself, I look upon them with a feeling akin to respect, being deeply persuaded that they are the most antediluvian of creatures ; for the great cataclysm, which drowned our grand-uncles eighteen hundred years after the creation of the world, was a time of rejoicing, conquest, and festivity for the fishes.

§ 7

TRUFFLES

43. WHO says *truffle* pronounces a great word, charged with toothsome and amorous memories for the skirted sex, and for the bearded sex with memories amorous and toothsome.

This twofold distinction belongs to the noblest of tubercles, because it is not only delicious to the taste, but is also believed to foster powers the exercise whereof is eminently pleasurable.

The origin of the truffle is unknown ; it is found, but mystery enwraps its birth and growth. Great brains have pondered it ; its seed was believed to have been discovered, and it was

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declared that truffles might be grown at will. Vain hopes, and promise unfulfilled ! No harvest was reaped from that sowing ; and perhaps this is no great misfortune, for the price of truffles is in part due to caprice, and it may be that they would be held in less esteem were they multiplied and made cheap.

'Rejoice, dear friend,' said I one day to *Mme de V* . . . ; 'a device has been shown before the Society for Encouragement, by which wonderful lace will be manufactured for almost nothing.'

'Why,' the fair lady made answer, with an air of sovereign indifference, 'if lace were cheap, do you suppose anything would induce me to wear such rubbish ?'

44. TRUFFLES were known to the *Romans* ; but it does not appear that they ever tasted the French variety. Those which graced their tables came from *Greece*, *Africa*, and *Lybia*, the last especially ; the substance of them was pink and white, and Lybian truffles were the most sought after, as being at once tenderer and more fragrant.

. . . *Gustus elementa per omnia quærunt.*—JUVENAL.

After the *Romans*, a long interval elapsed during which the truffle was forgotten ; and its resurrection occurred but recently, for I have read many ancient cookery books in which no mention is made of it ; its rise may be said to have been witnessed by the generation which is passing away as I write.

As recently as 1780, truffles were rare in *Paris*, being only obtainable, and then in small quantities, at the *Hôtel des Américains* and the *Hôtel de Provence* ; and a truffled turkey was a great luxury, only to be seen on the tables of great lords or their mistresses.

We owe the large supplies of the present day to the dealers, who have rapidly increased in number, and who, seeing that truffles were in favour, sent their agents all over the kingdom, and by paying good prices and employing mail-couriers and express coaches as means of transport, made truffle-seeking general throughout the country ; for since they cannot be planted, it is only by careful search that the increasing demand can be met.

It may be said that even now as I write (1825), the fame of the truffle is at its zenith. The meal is almost unknown in which no truffled dish occurs. However good in itself an

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entrée may be, it makes but a poor appearance if it be not garnished with truffles. Who has not felt his mouth water at the very mention of truffles *à la provençale* ?

A *sauté* of truffles is a dish whereof the mistress of the house always does the honours herself ; in a word, the truffle is the diamond of cookery.

I have sought an inner reason for this preference, for it seemed to me that other substances had an equal claim to the honour ; and I found it to be due to a generally accepted notion that truffles are the food of love ; and what is more, I am persuaded that nearly all our perfections, predilections, and admirations are born of the same cause, so closely are we held in bondage by the most capricious and tyrannical of the senses.

My next task was to find out whether the notion was founded upon fact ; a course undoubtedly beset with pitfalls, nor unprovocative of cynic laughter ; but *honni soit qui mal y pense* ! To seek the truth is ever commendable.

I first approached the ladies, in deference to their nice taste and perception of things ; but it was soon apparent that I ought to have begun my inquiry forty years earlier, and the replies which I received were all irony and evasion ; one only of the fair was frank with me, and her words you shall hear ; they are the words of a woman witty without pretension, virtuous but no prude, and to whom love is now but a tender memory.

'*Monsieur*,' she said, 'one day, years ago, when suppers were still the fashion, I supped at home *en trio* with my husband and a friend. *Verseuil* (for so my friend was called) was a handsome man, not without wit, and a constant visitor at my house ; but he had never said a word to make me look on him in the light of a lover ; and if at times he confessed an admiration for me, 'twas so discreetly, none but a fool might take offence. On that day, the fates decreed that he was to be alone with me during the rest of the evening, for my husband, having certain affairs to attend to, was due to leave us early. The basis of our supper, and indeed the only dish of any consequence, was a wonderful truffled fowl, which the subdelegate of *Périgueux* had sent to us. In those days such a dish was a rare luxury ; and you may guess, from its origin, that this one was perfection. The truffles especially were delicious, and you know how I love them ; nevertheless, I contained myself ; moreover, I drank nothing but a single glass of champagne ; for I know not how it was,

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but I am a woman, and instinct warned me that something would happen before the evening was out.

‘Before long my husband went away, leaving me alone with *Verseuil*, whom he regarded as perfectly harmless. At first we talked of this and that indifferently ; but very soon the conversation took a decidedly narrower and more intimate turn. *Verseuil* became first expansive, then complimentary and affectionate, and finally, when he saw that I was only amused by his pretty sallies, so importunate that it was no longer possible to mistake his intentions. At that I woke up as from a dream, and defended myself all the more sincerely in that my heart said no word in his favour. Still he persisted, and even sought to use violence, so that I was hard put to it to keep him at arm’s length ; and indeed only succeeded in doing so, to my shame be it said, by allowing him to believe that the future was not devoid of hope. At last he took his leave, and I went to bed and slept soundly. But next morning was the day of judgment ; I examined my conduct of the evening before, and found it reprehensible. I ought to have stopped *Verseuil* at the outset, and never to have lent myself to a conversation which held so many snares. My pride should have been earlier roused, and my eyes armed with severity ; I ought to have pulled the bell, cried aloud, grown angry, done everything, in short, which I did not do. What shall I say, *Monsieur* ? I put it all down to the truffles : I am altogether persuaded that they had given me a dangerous predisposition ; and if I have not entirely abstained from them since (which would have been too strict a penance), at least I never eat them even now but the pleasure which they give me is tinged with some misgivings.’

A confession, be it never so frank, has not the weight of doctrine. I therefore sought further information ; I called to mind my own experiences, and consulted men of unimpeachable integrity ; I summoned them all together in committee, tribunal, senate, sanhedrin, areopagus ; and we passed the following resolution, which shall provide matter for commentary to the schoolmen of the twenty-fifth century :

‘The truffle is not a positive aphrodisiac, but it can upon occasion make women tenderer and men more apt to love.’

White truffles are found in *Piedmont*, of extreme merit ; they have a faint taste of garlic, which mars their perfection not at all, being free from unpleasant after-effects.

The best truffles in *France* come from *Périgord* and *High*

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Provence ; they are in full flavour about the month of January.

Very choice, too, are those which come from *Bugey* ; but this kind has the defect of being difficult to preserve. I myself have made four separate attempts, for the benefit of those who stroll on the banks of *Seine*, and only one was successful ; but at least on that occasion they recognised both the goodness of the thing and the merits of difficulty overcome.

Burgundy and *Dauphiné* truffles are of poor quality ; they are hard and lack substance ; thus there are truffles and truffles, and degrees of merit in them as in all things.

Recourse is generally had, for the finding of truffles, to dogs and pigs trained for the purpose ; but there are also men with so practised an eye that they have only to look at a field in order to be able to say, with some certainty, whether it contains truffles, and if so, what will be the size and weight of them.

Are Truffles Indigestible? It only remains to inquire whether the truffle is indigestible. Our answer will be in the negative.

This official and final decision is founded :

1°. Upon the nature of the actual subject of our inquiry (the truffle is easy to masticate, weighs very little, and is neither hard nor tough) ;

2°. Upon our own observations, conducted during the space of more than fifty years, in the course of which we have never seen a single truffle-eater suffering from indigestion ;

3°. Upon the evidence of the most famous practitioners in *Paris*, which is the city of gourmands, and pre-eminently truffliverous ;

4°. And lastly, upon the daily conduct of the legal fraternity, who, other things being equal, consume more truffles than any other class of citizens ; witness, among others, *Lawyer Malouet*, who used to absorb enough of them to upset the digestive organs of an elephant, but who nevertheless lived to be eighty-six years old.

Hence it may be held for certain that the truffle is a food as wholesome as it is agreeable, and that, taken in moderation, it will go down as easily as a letter into a post-box.

This is not to say that indisposition may not be felt after some great dinner, at which, among other things, truffles have been eaten ; but such accidents only befall persons who, being already rammed as tight as cannon by the end of the first

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course, proceed to stuff themselves with the second likewise, in their anxiety to miss none of the good things before them.

Then it is no fault of the truffles ; and certain it is that they would have suffered still more painfully, if instead of truffles they had in like circumstances eaten the same quantity of potatoes.

Let us conclude with a true story, which shows how easily mistakes arise from imperfect observation.

I had one day invited *M. Simonard* to dine with me, a very worthy old gentleman, and a gourmand of the first rank. Whether because I was aware of his particular tastes, or in order to prove to all my guests that I had their happiness at heart, I had been no niggard with the truffles, which appeared under the ægis of a virgin turkey admirably stuffed.

M. Simonard fell to with great energy ; and as I knew that he had not died of them so far, I let him be, begging him not to go too fast, for that no one had designs on his property.

All went well, and it was late before he took his leave ; but on reaching home he was seized with violent gripes, accompanied by retching, choking, and general sickness.

This disquieting state of affairs continued for some time ; and had already been diagnosed as indigestion due to truffles, when nature suddenly came to the rescue. *M. Simonard* opened his mouth wide, and shot out a single fragment of truffle, which hit the wall and rebounded with enough violence to imperil the persons of his attendants.

Instantly the distressing symptoms ceased, and the sufferer was at ease again ; his digestion resumed its normal course, and he fell asleep, to wake next morning in perfect health and quite unembittered by his experience.

The cause of the trouble was soon ascertained. Many years have passed since *M. Simonard* began eating, and his aging teeth have found their task too heavy ; some of the precious ossicles have emigrated, and the rest no longer coincide so exactly as could be wished.

Under these conditions, one truffle had escaped mastication and gone down nearly whole into the gulf ; the action of digestion had borne it towards the pylorus, where it had temporarily lodged ; and this unnatural lodgment was the cause of the evil, even as its subsequent expulsion was the remedy.

Thus there was no indigestion, but only disturbance due to the presence of a foreign body.

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Such was the decision reached by the examining committee, who saw the guilty article, and graciously invited me to be their mouthpiece.

M. Simonard is as fervently devoted to the truffle as ever, and still attacks with all his old audacity ; but he is careful to masticate more thoroughly before he swallows ; and he thanks God, in the joy of his heart, for that this sanitary precaution has prolonged his span of earthly bliss.

§ 8

ON SUGAR

45. THE recent advance of science enables us to define *sugar* as a sweet-tasting, crystalline substance, resoluble by fermentation into carbonic acid and alcohol.

Formerly, the word implied the solidified and crystallised juice of the sugar-cane (*arundo saccharifera*).

This seed was originally found in the *Indies* ; and it is certain that the *Romans* had no knowledge of sugar, either as a common article of food or as a crystal.

There are, it is true, passages in ancient literature which seem to indicate an acquaintance with the art of extracting sweetness from reeds : *Lucan* says :

Quique bibunt tenera dulces ab arundine succos.

But from water sweetened by a substance extracted from cane, to sugar as we now have it, is a long stage ; and the art was only rudimentary among the *Romans*. It was in the colonies of the New World that sugar was first actually produced ; the cane was imported thither some two centuries ago, and flourished. It was sought to turn its sweet juices to the best advantage, and at the cost of many experiments syrup, crude sugar, molasses, and refined sugar were successively extracted from them.

The cultivation of the sugar-cane has become an affair of prime importance ; for it is a source of wealth not only to the grower, but to all who trade in the product in its various forms, as well as to the governments which tax it.

Indigenous It was long believed that tropical heat was essential to the
Sugar growth of sugar, but about the year 1740 *Margraff* discovered
its presence in certain plants occurring within the temperate

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zone, notably the beetroot : and the value of his discovery was demonstrated by the experiments of *Professor Achard* in *Berlin*.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when circumstances made sugar scarce, and consequently dear in *France*, the Government issued an appeal to science. The result was highly gratifying, and it was definitely ascertained that sugar was of widespread occurrence throughout the vegetable kingdom ; it was discovered in the raisin, the chestnut, the potato, and, most important of all, the beetroot.

This last plant was made the subject of close study, and a host of experiments took place, which showed that here was a matter in which the Old World could dispense with the services of the New. Factories sprang up in all parts of *France* and met with varying degrees of success ; the new art of saccharification was naturalised, and the day may yet come when circumstances compel us to revive it.

The most important of these factories was that which *M. Benjamin Delessert*, a citizen of worth, whose name is always coupled with what is useful and good, established at *Passy*, near *Paris*.

A prolonged series of operations enabled him to clear up such doubtful points as remained to hinder the process ; he shared the secret of his discoveries, even with those who might have been tempted to become his rivals ; the head of the Government visited him in person, and appointed him purveyor to the palace of the *Tuileries*.

When the change of circumstances, following upon the Restoration and peace, brought the price of sugar down again, the beet-sugar factories lost a great part of their advantages. But several of them still flourish, and *M. Benjamin Delessert* makes large quantities every year at a reasonable profit, thus preserving methods which may well prove of value in the future.¹

When beet sugar was first put on the market, persons interested in cane sugar, as well as the ignorant masses, found that its taste was unpleasant, and that it was inferior as a sweetener ; some even declared it to be unwholesome.

¹ It may be added that the Society for the Encouragement of National Industries, at its general meeting, voted a gold medal to *M. Crespel*, of *Arras*, who yearly manufactures more than one hundred and fifty thousand pieces of beet sugar ; and is able to pay his way, even when cane sugar is so low as 2 fr. 20 c. the kilogramme ; this is only made possible by his system of extracting spirits by distillation from the waste material, which is thereafter used as cattle-fodder.

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The contrary has been proved by any number of exact experiments ; and *M. le Comte Chaptal* has embodied the result of these in his excellent work, *Chemistry Applied to Agriculture*, volume ii. page 12, 1st edition.

‘The sugars extracted from these various plants,’ says the famous chemist, ‘are of exactly the same nature, and differ from one another in no single respect, when they are refined to the same degree of purity. Taste, crystallisation, colour, and specific gravity are absolutely identical, and the most experienced judge or taster may be defied to tell one from another.’

A striking example of the force of prejudice and the difficulty of establishing the truth is to be observed in *Great Britain*, where not ten persons will be found in a hundred, drawn from all classes, to believe in the possibility of making sugar out of beetroot.

Different
Uses of
Sugar

SUGAR made its entry into the world by way of the apothecary’s laboratory. The importance of the part which it then played is preserved in the old saying, of anyone lacking in something essential, that he was ‘like an apothecary without his sugar.’

That it came from such a source was enough to procure it an unfavourable reception ; some said that it was heating, some that it was a menace to the lungs, others that it was a cause of apoplexy ; but calumny was forced to give way to truth, and more than eighty years have passed since the first utterance of that weighty aphorism : ‘Sugar is good for everything except the purse.’

Under so impenetrable an ægis, sugar came daily into more general use, and there is no alimentary substance which has undergone more amalgamations and transformations.

Many persons like to eat pure sugar, and in some cases, most of them desperate, the Faculty prescribe it in that form, as being at least a harmless remedy, and a pleasant one.

Sugar-and-water is a refreshing, wholesome, and agreeable drink, and at times valuable as a medicine.

Sugar mixed with a smaller proportionate quantity of water, and subjected to heat, yields syrups, to which all kinds of flavour may be added ; they are at all times refreshing, and please all tastes in one variety or another.

Sugar mixed with water, from which the caloric is then

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extracted, gives ices, which originated in *Italy*, and seem first to have been imported into *France* by *Catherine de Médicis*.

Sugar in wine gives a cordial, of such well-known restorative properties that in some countries it is poured over certain cakes which are brought to the newly married on their wedding night ; a custom analogous to the Persian one of preparing sheep's trotters in vinegar for the same purpose and occasion.

Mixed with flour and eggs, it produces biscuits, macaroons, cracknels, buns, cakes, and all the many kinds of light pastry which constitute the modern art of the sweet pastrycook.

Mixed with milk, it produces the various creams and blanc-manges whose delicate and ethereal flavour is so welcome after the more substantial taste of meat.

Mixed with coffee, it brings out the full flavour thereof.

Mixed with coffee and milk, it makes a light, agreeable, and easily procurable form of nourishment, eminently suited to persons accustomed to begin business immediately after breakfast. Coffee and milk is also a source of sovereign pleasure to the ladies ; but the cold eye of science has observed that the too frequent use of it may prove harmful to that which they hold most dear.

Mixed with fruit and flowers, it gives jam, marmalade, preserves, jellies, pastes, and candies, and enables us to enjoy the fragrance of those fruits and flowers long after the time fixed by nature for their duration. It is not impossible that this last function of sugar might be successfully applied to the art of embalming, which is still in a rudimentary stage.

Finally, sugar mixed with alcohol gives spirituous liqueurs, which are well known to have been first invented to put new ardour into the aged frame of *Louis XIV* ; their effect upon the palate is so lively, and their fumes so fragrant, that even now they still form the *nec plus ultra* of gastronomical bliss.

These are not all the uses of sugar. It may be called the universal condiment, which is never out of place. There are persons who use it with meat, sometimes even with vegetables, and often with fresh fruit. It is essential to the fashionable mixed drinks of the day, such as punch, negus, syllabub, and others of exotic origin ; and its applications are of infinite variety, being modified to suit the tastes of peoples and individuals.

Such is this substance, the very name of which was almost unknown to *France* in the days of *Louis XIII*, and yet which has become a prime necessity to us of the nineteenth century ;

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for there is scarcely a woman with money to spend who does not spend more on sugar than on bread.

M. Delacroix, that genial and prolific author, was heard one day at *Versailles* to complain of the price of sugar, which at that time was above five francs a pound. 'Ah,' said he in melting tones, 'if ever sugar comes down to thirty sous again, I shall never as long as I live drink water without sugar in it.'

His longing has not been in vain ; he is still living, and keeps his word, I trust.

§ 9

COFFEE

Origin of
Coffee

46. THE first coffee-tree was found in *Arabia*, and notwithstanding the many transplantations which the shrub has since undergone, *Arabia* still remains the source of the best coffee.

According to an old tradition, coffee was discovered by a goat-herd, who perceived a strange restlessness and hilarity in his flock whenever they had browsed on coffee-berries. Be the legend true or not, however, only half the honour of the discovery would belong to the observant herdsman ; the other half must be allowed to the first man who bethought himself of applying heat to the beans. For the decoction of crude coffee makes a most inferior beverage ; but carbonisation develops the characteristic flavour and oily consistency of coffee as we drink it to-day ; and these qualities would never have been known without the intervention of heat.

The *Turks*, who are our masters in this matter, never make use of a mill to grind their coffee into powder ; they pound it in mortars with wooden pestles ; and when those instruments have been long in use, they become precious and are sold at a high price.

I made it my business, for several reasons, to find out the difference between the results obtained by the two methods, and which was to be preferred. With this end in view, I carefully roasted a pound of pure Mocha, and divided it into two equal parts, one of which was then ground in a mill, and the other pounded after the Turkish fashion.

I made coffee from each of the two powders ; I took an equal quantity of each, and upon each poured an equal quantity of

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boiling water, conducting the whole operation with scrupulous impartiality.

I tasted those two coffees, and submitted them also to the most distinguished connoisseurs ; and the unanimous verdict was pronounced, that the coffee made with pounded powder was evidently superior to that which the ground powder yielded.

Anyone who so desires may repeat the experiment. Meanwhile, I can exhibit a singular example of the different effects which may result from different methods of manipulation.

'Monsieur,' said *Napoleon* one day to *Laplace*, the Senator, 'how comes it that a glass of water in which I crush a lump of sugar seems so much better than one in which I place a like quantity of soft sugar ?'

'Sire,' replied the scientist, 'there are three substances whose elements are identical, namely, sugar, gum, and starch ; they only differ in respect of certain conditions, the secret of which nature keeps to herself ; and I think it possible that under the action of the pestle, certain portions of the moist sugar assume the character of gum or starch, and cause the difference which your Majesty has observed.'

This anecdote received some publicity at the time, and further investigations have confirmed the truth of the view expressed by the Senator.

SOME years ago all minds were simultaneously bent upon discovering the best way of making coffee, a phenomenon, it can hardly be doubted, for which the partiality of the head of the Government for the drug was responsible.

Different
Ways of
Making
Coffee

It was proposed to make it without roasting, without reducing it to powder, by infusing it cold, by boiling it for three-quarters of an hour, by placing it in a sealed boiler, etc., etc.

In my time I have tried every one of these methods, and all others hitherto imagined, and my vote is definitely awarded in favour of the method called *à la Dubelloy*, which consists in placing the coffee in a porcelain or silver receptacle pierced with very small holes, and pouring boiling water over it. The first decoction is then brought to boiling-point again, and again passed through the strainer, when the coffee will be as clear and as good as possible.

In one of my experiments I made use of a high-pressure boiler ; but the result was a mixture of extractive matter and bitterness, only fit to rasp the throat of a *Cossack*.

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Effects of Coffee

THE learned have uttered many opinions concerning the sanitary properties of coffee, nor have they always seen eye to eye ; we will steer clear of the fray, and turn our attention wholly to the most important of them, namely, its influence upon the organs of thought.

It is not to be doubted that coffee induces a high state of excitement in the brain ; and whoever drinks it for the first time is certain to be robbed of a portion of his sleep. Sometimes the effect is softened or modified by habit ; but there are many individuals who always remain subject to this excitement, and are consequently obliged to renounce the use of coffee altogether.

I have said that the effect may be modified by habit, but this need not hinder it from occurring in another form ; for I have observed that persons who are not prevented by coffee from sleeping at night, have need of it to keep them awake by day, and are apt to fall asleep during the evening when they have not drunk coffee after their dinner. There are many others, moreover, who are sleepy all day long when they have not drunk their cup of coffee in the morning. *Voltaire* and *Buffon* were great coffee-drinkers, and perhaps drew thence, one, the admirable clearness of thought that is in all his works, the other, the fervent harmony of his style. It is evident that certain passages in the *Essays on Man*, the *Dog*, the *Tiger*, the *Lion*, and the *Horse*, were written in a state of extreme cerebral exaltation.

The insomnia caused by coffee is not distressing ; it adds clearness to the faculty of perception, and takes away all wish for sleep ; that is all. There is none of the agitation and unhappiness which accompany insomnia brought on by any other cause ; nevertheless, it is an untimely condition of excitement, and may ultimately prove dangerous.

Formerly none but persons of ripe age drank coffee ; now everyone drinks it, and it may be the sting of its mental lash which drives so vast a throng to storm the approaches of *Olympus* and the *Temple of Memory*. The cobbler-author of the tragedy of *The Queen of Palmyra*, which drew all *Paris* a few years ago, was much addicted to coffee ; and thereby he rose higher than the *joiner of Nevers*, who was but a drunkard.

Coffee is a far more powerful liquor than is commonly believed. A man of sound constitution may drink two bottles of wine a day, and live long ; the same man would not so long sustain

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a like quantity of coffee ; he would become imbecile or die of consumption.

I saw a man in *London*, in *Leicester-square*, actually crippled by immoderate use of coffee ; he no longer suffered, having grown accustomed to his condition, and had cut down his allowance to five or six cups a day.

It is the duty of all papas and mammas to forbid their children coffee, unless they wish to have little dried-up machines, stunted and old at the age of twenty. This warning is particularly commended to *Parisians*, whose children are not always so strong and healthy as if they had been born in other parts of the country, such as the Department of the *Ain*.

I am myself among those who have been forced to give up coffee, and I will make an end of this chapter by relating how I one day fell too surely beneath its spell.

The *Duc de Massa*, at that time Minister of Justice, had required me to undertake a piece of work which called for the closest application ; he gave me very short notice, for it was to be ready by the following day.

I therefore resigned myself to a night's work ; and in order to guard against the risk of falling asleep, fortified my dinner with two large cups of strong coffee.

I came home at seven o'clock, having been warned to expect the necessary papers about that time ; but found instead a letter informing me that, owing to some official formality, I could not have them before next morning. Thus disappointed, in the full meaning of the term, I returned to the house at which I had dined, and played a game of piquet, without experiencing any of the distractions to which I am ordinarily subject.

For this I duly praised the coffee ; but at the same time, I was not without anxiety as to how I was to pass the night. However, I went to bed at my accustomed hour, thinking that even if my slumbers were not of the soundest I might at least sleep four or five hours, which would carry me comfortably enough into the following morning.

I was mistaken ; at the end of two hours in bed I was wider awake than at the beginning, and in a state of lively mental activity ; my brain was like a mill with all its wheels revolving, but nothing for them to grind.

I felt that I must give some employment to this active inclination, or the need of sleep would never come ; and so I passed

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the time by turning a short tale, which I had lately read in an English book, into verse.

I easily finished it, whereupon, being still as wide awake as before, I attempted a second ; but in vain, for my poetic ardour cooled at the end of a dozen lines, and I was forced to give it up.

And in the end I passed the whole night without once falling asleep, or even dozing for a single moment ; I got up, and passed the day in the same condition, which remained unaltered by the food which I ate or the work which I had to do. Finally, when I lay down next night at my accustomed hour, I calculated that I had not closed my eyes for forty hours.

§ 10

CHOCOLATE

Origin of
Chocolate

47. THE first men who settled in *America* were driven thither by the thirst for gold. At that time mines were almost the only known source of wealth ; agriculture and commerce were in their infancy, and political economy was yet unborn. The *Spaniards*, then, found precious metals ; but their discovery was almost a barren one, because its worth depreciated in proportion to the quantity discovered, and we have many more active methods of swelling the volume of riches.

But the same lands, where the sun's powerful rays bring the fields to a state of extreme fertility, were found eminently suited to the cultivation of sugar and coffee ; moreover, the potato, the indigo plant, vanilla, quinine, and cacao were discovered there, and these were treasures indeed.

If these discoveries took place despite the obstacles put in the way of enterprise by a jealous nation, it is reasonable to hope that they will be multiplied tenfold in the future, and that the researches of the scientists of old *Europe*, in so many unexplored regions, will enrich the three kingdoms, animal, vegetable, and mineral, with a multitude of new substances, some of which, like vanilla, will provide us with new sensations, others, like cocoa, with new alimentary resources.

That which we call *chocolate* is made by cooking the kernel of the cacao-nut with sugar and cinnamon ; such is the classic definition of chocolate. Sugar is an integral part of it ; for from the kernels alone only cacao-paste or cocoa is obtained, and not chocolate. When to the sugar, cinnamon, and cacao, the delicious flavour of vanilla is added, the *nec plus ultra*

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of perfection is attained to which this preparation can be brought.

To this small number of substances have taste and experience reduced the many ingredients which had been successively tried as adjuncts to cocoa, such as pepper, pimento, aniseed, ginger, aciola, and others.

The chocolate-tree is indigenous throughout the islands and mainland of *South America*; but it is now generally agreed that those trees yield the best fruit which grow on the banks of the *Maracaibo*, in the valleys of *Caraccas* and the rich province of *Sokomusco*. There the kernel grows larger, and the flavour is sweeter and more concentrated. Since these districts became more accessible, it has been possible to make frequent tests, and trained palates are unerring and unanimous in their praise.

The Spanish ladies of the New World love chocolate to the point of madness; not content with drinking it at frequent intervals during the day, they sometimes order it to be brought to them in church, a piece of sensuality which formerly met with the censures of the priesthood. But time brought indulgence; and the reverend *Father Escobar*, whose metaphysics were as subtle as his morals were accommodating, formally declared that liquid chocolate was no breach of fasting, thus evoking for the benefit of his fair penitents the ancient proverb : *Liquidum non frangit jejunum*.

Chocolate was introduced into *Spain* in the early part of the seventeenth century, and its use became rapidly popular, owing to the predilection which women and monks, especially the latter, displayed for the new aromatic drink. The habit has remained unchanged, and to this day chocolate is the principal refreshment of polite society in all parts of the *Peninsula*.

Chocolate crossed the mountains with *Anne of Austria*, the daughter of *Philip II* and wife of *Louis XIII*. The Spanish monks too made it known, by sending presents of it to their French brethren, and successive Spanish ambassadors also helped to bring it into fashion; at the beginning of the Regency it was more generally in use than coffee, because in those days it was taken as an agreeable form of nourishment, while coffee was still a rare and costly drink.

It is well known that *Linnaeus* called cacao *cacao theobroma*, the drink of the gods. A reason has been sought for this emphatic qualification; some hold that he wished to please his

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confessor, others see flattery in it, addressed to the queen who first introduced the custom. (*Incertum.*)

Properties
of Chocolate

THE true nature and properties of chocolate, and its place in the category of foods hot, cold, or cool, have been the occasion of much argument ; but it must be confessed that what has been written by the learned contributes little towards the manifestation of truth.

Time, however, and experience, those two great teachers, have proved beyond question that chocolate, carefully prepared, is a wholesome and agreeable form of food ; that, unlike coffee (of which it is in fact the antidote), it holds no terrors for the fair ; that it is a special boon to persons faced with some occasion of great mental stress, travellers, and such as labour at the bar or in the pulpit ; and that finally it agrees with the feeblest stomachs, has proved beneficial to chronic maladies, and remains the last resource in diseases of the pylorus.

Chocolate owes these various properties to the simple circumstance that being but an *eleosaccharum*, and few substances containing so high a proportion of alimentary particles, it is almost wholly animalisable.

During the war chocolate was difficult to obtain and very costly ; efforts were made to find a substitute, and one of the blessings of peace has been the disappearance of the strange brews which we drank of necessity, but which were no more chocolate than an infusion of chicory is Mocha coffee.

There are persons who complain of being unable to digest chocolate, and others who, going to the opposite extreme, declare that it contains too little nourishment, and passes too quickly through the system. It is most likely that the former have only themselves to blame, and that the chocolate which they are accustomed to use is of poor quality or badly prepared ; for good chocolate well made should agree with any stomach retaining the least digestive power. As to the others, their cure is easily prescribed ; let them reinforce their breakfast with a small meat pasty, a cutlet, or a grilled kidney, wash down the whole with a good bowl of *Sokomusco*, and thank God for providing them with a stomach of superior activity.

This leads me to insert an observation concerning the degree of exactitude on which it is possible to rely.

When you have breakfasted both well and amply, if you swallow a generous cup of good chocolate at the end of the

VI. Specialities

meal, you will have digested the whole perfectly three hours later, and may then dine in comfort. . . . Out of zeal for science, and by sheer force of eloquence, I have persuaded not a few ladies to make the experiment, although they thought to die of it ; in every case they were delighted with the result, and none failed to glorify the Professor.

Those who habitually drink chocolate are conspicuous for unfailing health and immunity from the host of little ills which mar the enjoyment of life ; their weight is also less inclined to vary ; and these are two advantages which anyone may verify in society and among people whose diet can be ascertained.

This is the true place to speak of the properties of chocolate flavoured with amber ; properties which I have verified by many experiments, the result of which I am proud to lay before my readers.

Listen, then : let any man who shall have drunk too deeply of the cup of pleasure, or given to work too many of the hours which should belong to sleep ; who shall find the accustomed polish of his wit turned to dullness, feel damp oppression in the air and time hanging heavily, or be tortured by a fixed idea which robs him of all liberty of thought ; let all such, we say, administer to themselves a good pint of ambered chocolate, allowing from sixty to seventy-two grains of amber to a pound, and they will see marvels.

In my own peculiar way of specifying things, I call ambered chocolate the *chocolate of the afflicted*, because in each of the several conditions cited above there is present a feeling difficult to describe, but *common to them all*, which resembles affliction.

VERY good chocolate is made in *Spain* ; but it is unwise to procure it from that country, because all the Spanish makers are not equally skilful, and the recipient is forced to take what has been sent, be it good or bad.

Difficulty of
Making
Good
Chocolate

Italian chocolate is not to the French taste ; in general the cacao is over-roasted, and the chocolate therefore bitter and insufficiently nutritious, because a part of the kernels has been burnt up.

Now although drinking chocolate has become universal in *France*, and everyone has learned to make it, few have attained perfection, because the process is very far from being without difficulties.

You must be able, first of all, to tell good cacao from bad,

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and be *resolved* to use it in all its purity ; for not even the best that can be obtained is free from blemish, and a careless eye often overlooks bruised kernels, which must be thrown out if the best results are expected. Moreover, the roasting of cacao is a very delicate operation, and demands a certain tact not far removed from inspiration. There are those in whom this power is born, and who never err.

A peculiar talent is also needed for the proper regulation of the amount of sugar which must enter into the composition ; no rule can be laid down, for the quantity will vary according to the flavour of the kernels, and the degree of heat to which the cacao has been brought. The pounding and mixing demand no less care, for upon their absolute perfection the digestibility of the chocolate in part depends.

Other considerations must govern the choice and quantity of flavouring, which should not be the same for chocolate intended to be taken as food, and for chocolate which is to be eaten as a sweet. The decision will largely depend upon whether or not vanilla is to be added to the mixture ; and in short, in order to make exquisite chocolate, a number of very subtle equations must be solved, which we are accustomed to profit by without being aware of their existence.

For some time now, machines for making chocolate have been in use ; we do not believe that anything is thereby added to its perfection, but it is certainly a saving of labour, and those who have adopted this method should be able to sell their chocolate cheaper. The contrary, however, appears to be the rule ; and this is too clear an indication that the genius of commerce is not yet naturalised in *France*, for in all fairness the facility procured by the use of machines should be equally profitable to the merchant and the consumer.

Being ourselves fond of chocolate, we have in our time put all the dealers to the test ; and we are now faithful to *M. Debauve*, at No. 26 *rue des Saints-Pères* ; he is purveyor of chocolate to the King, and we rejoice to know that the sun's rays have lighted upon one so worthy of illumination. The reason is not far to seek ; *Debauve* is a distinguished pharmacist, and brings to his chocolate-making all the learning which he had acquired for use in a wider sphere.

Those who have never made it can have no notion of the difficulties which must be overcome before perfection is reached, nor of how much care, adroitness, and experience are needed

VI. Specialities

to achieve a chocolate which shall be sweet but not insipid, strong but not bitter, aromatic but not sickly, and thick but free from sediment. Such are the qualities of *M. Debauve's* chocolate ; it owes its supremacy to a sound choice of materials, a firm determination to allow nothing inferior to leave the factory, and the keen eye of the proprietor, which watches over every detail of the work.

Following the lights of sound doctrine, *M. Debauve* has further undertaken to supply his numerous clients with palatable antidotes against certain minor ailments.

Thus, to persons lacking flesh he offers a restorative chocolate, flavoured with salep ; to those whose nerves are weak, antispasmodic chocolate, flavoured with essence of orange-flower ; to irritable persons, almond-milk chocolate ; and to this list he will doubtless add *chocolate for the afflicted*, prepared with amber *secundum artem*.

But his supreme merit consists in his offering, at a moderate price, an excellent ordinary chocolate, which is enough in itself for our morning breakfast, delights us at dinner in rich creams, and enchants us yet again at the evening's end in ices, sweetmeats, and other drawing-room dainties, not to mention crackers with and without mottoes.

Our only acquaintance with *M. Debauve* is through his wares ; we have never set eyes on him ; but we know that he is helping valiantly to free *France* from the necessity, under which she has laboured too long, of paying tribute to *Spain*, by providing *Paris* and the country at large with a chocolate whose reputation continually increases. We know, further, that he is daily in receipt of new orders from abroad ; and it is on these grounds, and as an original member and part founder of the Society for the Encouragement of National Industries, that we here accord him a form of honourable mention of which it will be seen that we are far from prodigal.

THE *Americans* prepare their cacao in bars without sugar ; when they wish to make chocolate, they send for boiling water ; each person scrapes and puts into his cup as much cacao as he requires, pours the hot water over it, and adds sugar and flavouring to suit his taste.

This method is contrary both to our habits and our tastes ; we prefer the chocolate to reach us ready prepared. Now transcendental chemistry informs us that in this condition it

Official
Method of
Preparing
Chocolate

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must neither be scraped with a knife nor crushed with a pestle, because the collision which takes place in these two cases is apt to starchify certain portions of the sugar, and to make the drink insipid.

So, to make chocolate, that is to say, for immediate consumption, take about one and a half ounces for each cup of water, and let dissolve gradually while the water comes to the boil, stirring gently with a wooden spatula ; let boil for a quarter of an hour, to give the solution consistency, and serve piping hot.

More than fifty years ago *Mme d'Anstrel*, Superior of the Convent of the Visitation at *Belley*, spoke to me as follows : '*Monsieur*,' she said, 'when you wish to drink good chocolate, let it be made the day before in a porcelain coffee-pot, and left overnight. The night's rest concentrates it, and makes it velvet to the tongue. The good God cannot frown upon this small luxury, for He is Himself all excellence.'



VII. Theory of Frying

48. IT was a fine day in the month of May ; the sun shed his softest rays on the smoke-begrimed roofs of the city of pleasures, and, a rare thing, neither dust nor mud was in the streets.

The great mail-coaches had long since taken their rumbling departure, nor was the clatter of carts yet heard on the cobblestones ; the only vehicles at large were those open carriages from which beauty, both indigenous and exotic, sheltered beneath the most elegant of hats, is wont to dart scornful glances upon the vulgar, and glances most alluring upon the gilded few.

In short, 'twas three hours past midday when the Professor settled down into his chair of meditation.

His right leg rested vertically upon the floor ; his left, stretched at full length, formed a diagonal ; his loins and back were suitably sustained ; and on the lion-head extremities of the arms of that venerable chair he laid his hands.

His lofty brow revealed a love of close study, his mouth a leaning towards distractions less severe. Calm was his

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demeanour, and his bearing such that none beholding him could fail to exclaim, 'This *ancient of days* is certainly a sage.'

So sat the Professor, and summoned his chief cook ; and anon the servitor appeared, ready to receive counsel, instruction, or commands.

Address

'*Maître La Planche*,' said the Professor gravely, and in tones to pierce the hardest heart, 'all who sit at my table proclaim you a *souplist* of the highest order, and that is well, for soup is the first consolation of a craving stomach ; but I observe with sorrow that in the art of *frying* you are yet but a *falterer*.

'Yesterday I heard you groan with shame, when you served up that triumphal sole all pale, and flabby, and discoloured. My friend *Revenaz*¹ looked on you with reproachful eyes ; *M. Henri Roux* held his gnomonic nose to the west, and *M. le Président Sibuet* could not more bitterly have mourned a national disaster. This misfortune befell you, because you disregarded theory, being ignorant of its importance. You are a little headstrong, and I find it hard to persuade you that the phenomena which come to pass in your laboratory are simply the fulfilment of the eternal laws of nature, and that certain things which you do carelessly, and only because you have seen others do them, have none the less abstruse and scientific derivations.

'Listen carefully then, and be instructed, that you may never more have cause hereafter to blush for your handiwork.

§ I

CHEMICAL

'Not all the liquids which you expose to the action of fire can be charged with an equal quantity of heat ; nature has made them unequally receptive ; she alone holds the secret of this order of things, and she keeps it to herself ; we call it *caloric capacity*.

'Thus, you may dip your finger into boiling spirits of wine with impunity ; but from boiling brandy you would hastily withdraw it, and more quickly still from boiling water ; and a momentary immersion in boiling oil would wound you

¹ *M. Revenaz*, born at *Seisset*, in the neighbourhood of *Belley*, in the year 1757. An elector of the *grand collège*, he may be cited as a striking example of the happy outcome of prudent conduct joined to the most inflexible probity.

VII. Theory of Frying

cruelly, for oil has at least three times the heating capacity of water.

‘It is due to this peculiarity that hot liquids act differently upon the sapid substances immersed in them. Under the action of water those substances grow soft, disintegrate, and ultimately turn to pulp : thus broth or extracts are made ; under the action of oil, on the contrary, they contract, take on more or less of colour, and in the end become entirely carbonised.

‘In the first case, the water dissolves and absorbs the internal juices of the foodstuffs immersed in it ; in the second, those juices are preserved, because the oil cannot dissolve them ; and if the substance dries up, it is because its humid parts at last evaporate under the protracted influence of heat.

‘These two different processes have also different names : the process of boiling foodstuffs in oil or fat we call *frying*. I have said already, I believe, that for culinary purposes *fat* and *oil* are nearly synonymous, oil being but liquid fat, and fat solidified oil.

§ 2

THEORY APPLIED

‘Things fried are welcome at the festive board ; they introduce an appetising variation, and are pleasant to the eye ; they retain their natural flavour, and can be eaten with the fingers, an advantage much esteemed by the ladies. Moreover, frying furnishes a means of disguising, upon its second appearance, what has already been served up on the preceding evening, and stands cooks in excellent stead in unforeseen emergencies ; for no more time is needed to fry a four-pound carp than to boil an egg.

‘Now, the whole merit of frying consists in the *surprise* ; for such is the name given to the sudden action of the boiling liquid, which scorches or carbonises the surface of the substance concerned, at the very moment of its immersion.

‘By means of this *surprise*, a kind of vault is formed over the object, which prevents the oil from penetrating, and concentrates the juices within, so that they are cooked solely from the outside ; and in this way the flavour of the dish is enhanced to the highest possible degree.

‘The *surprise* will only take effect when the liquid is so hot that its action is sudden and instantaneous ; a condition at

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which it will only arrive after long exposure to the heat of a blazing fire.

'The following device will determine whether the oil has attained the required degree of heat: Cut a slice of bread and dip it in the frying-pan; if at the end of five or six seconds it comes out crisp and brown, proceed forthwith with the immersion; if not, you must stoke the fire and renew the experiment later.

'The *surprise* once effected, damp the fire, in order that the cooking be not too rapid, and that the juices which you have imprisoned may yield gradually to the transmuting influence of heat, which thus draws them together and enhances their flavour.

'You have doubtless observed that the surface of well-fried substances will not dissolve salt or sugar, one or other of which will be required, according to the nature of the object. Therefore you will not fail to reduce them to a fine powder, that they may acquire an extreme tendency to adhere, and that, so besprinkled, the fried substance may be duly seasoned by juxtaposition.

'I say nothing of the choice of oils and fats; you have already received enlightenment thereon from the library which I have placed at your disposal.

'But do not forget, when there shall be brought to your kitchen a basket of trout, each scarce a quarter-pound in weight, fresh from some swift stream that murmurs far from the capital, do not forget, I say, to fry them in the finest olive oil at your command; 'tis a simple dish, yet, salted, peppered, and decked with lemon slices, worthy to be laid before an Eminence.¹

'In the same way treat smelts, which are a special joy to adepts. The smelt is the beccafico of the sea; bird and fish are alike in being small and delicate, and altogether superior.

'These two prescriptions, let me add, are founded upon the nature of things. Experience has taught us that olive oil is only to be used in operations which can be performed within a short space of time, or which require no great heat, for pro-

¹ *M. Aulissin*, a learned advocate of *Naples*, and no mean performer upon the violoncello, was dining with me one day, when being much pleased with a certain dish, '*Questo è un vero boccone di cardinale!*' said he. 'Why,' replied I in the same tongue, 'do you not say, as we do, *a dish for a king?*' '*Monsieur,*' the musical advocate answered, 'we *Italians* hold that kings cannot be gourmands, because their meals are too short and solemn; but cardinals! ah!' And he chuckled in his own quaint way, *hou, hou, hou, hou, hou hou!*

VII. *Theory of Frying*

longed boiling invests it with an empyreumatic and unpleasant taste, due to the presence of certain particles of parenchyma, very difficult of extraction, which become carbonised.

'You have faced the ordeal of my infernal regions, and to you, first of all men, fell the glory of offering to an astounded world a huge fried turbot : that day was a day of gladness among the elect.

'Go, then : fail not to be scrupulous in all your undertakings, and never forget that from the moment when guests set foot within my dining-room, 'tis *we* who are charged with their well-being.'



VIII. On Thirst

49. THIRST is the inner consciousness of the need to drink.

The various fluids which circulate within our bodies and sustain life, evaporate at a heat of about one hundred and five degrees ; and the wastage which ensues would soon leave those fluids unfit to fulfil their appointed destiny, were they not often replenished and renewed ; their needs are the cause of the sensation of thirst.

We believe that the seat of thirst is situated throughout the digestive system. When a man is thirsty (and in our quality of sportsman we ourselves have often been in that predicament) he distinctly feels that all the absorbent parts of his mouth, throat, and stomach are actively craving moisture ; and if thirst is sometimes allayed by the application of liquids to parts other than its own organs, as, for example, in the case of bathing, it is because immediately upon being introduced into the system, they are rapidly carried towards the seat of distress, and so effect a cure.

VIII. On Thirst

A CAREFUL examination of this need of moisture reveals the existence of three distinct kinds of thirst : latent thirst, factitious thirst, and burning thirst.

Different
Kinds of
Thirst

Latent or habitual thirst is the equilibrium automatically maintained between transpiratory evaporation and the necessity of supplying its wants ; this it is which invites us to drink during meals, although we feel no pain, and enables us to drink at almost any hour of the day. In this form thirst is always with us, and is in some sort a part of our existence.

Factitious thirst is peculiar to the human race, and springs from an innate instinct which leads us to seek in certain liquids a power not implanted in them by nature, and only super-induced by fermentation. It is rather an artificial luxury than a natural need ; and thirst of this kind is absolutely unquenchable, because the liquors consumed with the object of appeasing it, in fact infallibly give it new life ; ultimately it becomes habitual, and such is the thirst of the drunkard in all countries, whose impotations rarely cease until the liquor runs dry or overcomes the drinker and puts him out of action.

When, on the contrary, we slake our thirst with pure water, which appears to be its natural antidote, we never drink a mouthful beyond our needs.

Burning thirst is induced by increase of need and the impossibility of satisfying latent thirst.

It is called *burning*, because it is accompanied by a burning of the tongue, dryness of the palate, and consuming heat throughout the body.

So acute is the sensation of thirst, that the word is synonymous, in nearly all languages, with extreme covetousness and imperious desire ; thus we speak of thirst for gold, riches, power, vengeance, etc., expressions which would not have become general, were it not enough to have been thirsty but once in a lifetime in order to recognise their justice.

Appetite is accompanied by an agreeable sensation, so long as it stops short of hunger ; thirst has no such pleasing nonage, but is no sooner felt than it causes distress and anxiety ; and the anxiety becomes terrible indeed when there is no hope of succour.

By a just compensation, the act of drinking may in certain circumstances procure the liveliest pleasure ; and when a mighty thirst is quenched, or a moderate thirst allayed by some delicious drink, the whole papillary apparatus is set tingling, from the tip of the tongue to the depths of the stomach.

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Death is caused far more rapidly by thirst than by hunger. Instances are known of men who, having water, have lived more than a week without food, whereas those who are absolutely without anything to drink never survive beyond five days.

The reason of this difference is that the hungry man dies solely from exhaustion and weakness, whereas the thirsty man is assailed by a burning fever which momentarily grows more acute.

Not everyone can withstand thirst so long ; witness a certain soldier of the Swiss Guard of *Louis XVI*, who died in 1787, after being only twenty-four hours without drinking.

He was at an inn with some of his comrades, one of whom, when he proffered his glass for more wine, accused him of drinking more often than all the rest, and of being unable to go without for a single moment. Whereupon he backed himself to go twenty-four hours without drinking ; and his bet was accepted, the stakes being ten bottles of wine to be drunk at the loser's expense.

From that moment the soldier drank no more, although he sat and watched his comrades drinking till they left the inn, more than two hours later.

The night, as we may suppose, passed without discomfort, but at dawn he sadly felt the loss of his accustomed tot of brandy. And all morning he was restless and ill at ease ; he came and went, got up and sat down without purpose, and seemed not to know what to do with himself.

At one o'clock he took to his bed, hoping to find peace there ; his sufferings increased, and he grew positively ill ; but all invitations to drink were in vain, he declared that he would hold out till evening ; for he was set on winning the wager, being doubtless also in part sustained by a soldier's pride, which forbade him to give way to pain.

And so he held his ground until seven o'clock ; but at half-past seven he felt great pain, turned to face death, and expired, unable even to taste a glass of wine which was held to his lips.

I received all these details the same evening from the *Sieur Schneider*, a worthy man and a piper in the Company of Swiss Guards, in whose quarters at *Versailles* I was then lodged.

Causes of
Thirst

50. DIVERS circumstances, together or apart, may contribute to provoke thirst. Some of these, which have not been without

VIII. On Thirst

influence upon our daily life and habits, we shall proceed to indicate.

Heat provokes thirst ; and hence the age-old tendency of man to fix his habitation beside a stream.

Bodily toil provokes thirst ; for this reason employers of labour never fail to recruit the strength of those in their employment with drinks ; and hence the saying that he gets the best price for wine who gives it to his employees.

Dancing provokes thirst ; and hence the numerous stimulating and refreshing drinks which have always accompanied the dance.

Declamation provokes thirst ; hence the glass of water which all orators sip with studied elegance, and which will soon be seen on the pulpit-ledge, next to the white handkerchief.¹

The pleasures of the flesh provoke thirst ; hence those poetical descriptions of *Cyprus*, *Amathontes*, *Cnidos*, and other haunts of *Venus*, in which cool groves abound, and flowing streams so tunelessly meander.

Singing provokes thirst ; and hence the universal reputation, fastened upon vocalists, of being indefatigable drinkers. Being a songster myself, I rise to protest against this slander, which has now no longer any salt or truth in it.

The singers of to-day drink with discretion and sagacity ; but if they are no longer toppers, they are gourmands of the third celestial degree, and it is said that the celebration of the Feast of *Sz. Cecilia* by the Transcendental Harmony Society has sometimes lasted more than twenty-four hours on end.

51. EXPOSURE to a high wind is a most active cause of thirst ; Example and I believe that the following anecdote will be read with pleasure, especially by sportsmen.

It is well known that quails show a decided preference for mountainous districts, where they are more certain of success in hatching their eggs, owing to the lateness of the harvest. When the rye is cut, they retreat into the oats and barley ; and when the mowing of the two last begins, they seek those fields where the ripening is least advanced. Then is the time to shoot them, for all the birds which a month earlier were scattered here and there over the countryside, will be found within a

¹ *Canon Délestra*, a most accomplished preacher, used always to swallow a comfit during the interval which he allowed to his audience, between each point in his discourse, for coughing, spitting, and blowing their noses.

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few acres' space ; and the season being nearly ended, they will all be as large and fat as can be desired.

Fat quails, then, were the lure which one day led myself and a few friends up the slopes of a mountain in the district of *Nantua*, in the canton called *Plan d'Hotonne* ; we found our quarry, and were about to begin shooting, on one of those beautiful September mornings when the sun shines with a brilliance unknown to *cockneys*.¹

But while we were eating our luncheon, a violent and most unwelcome gale blew up from the north ; which did not prevent us, however, from commencing operations.

We had not been shooting above a quarter of an hour, when the softest member of the party began to complain of thirst ; and no doubt he would have been made fun of, had not each of us felt thirsty likewise.

We all drank, for the donkey bearing our supplies was close at hand ; but the relief was of short duration. Our thirst soon returned, and with such intensity that some of us believed they were ill, and others that they were going to be ; there was even talk of returning home, which would have meant a ten-league expedition for nothing.

I had had time to collect my ideas, and I had discovered the reason of this extraordinary thirst. I called my friends together, and told them that we were feeling the influence of four unusual circumstances : the marked decrease in the pressure of the atmosphere at that altitude, which would cause our blood to circulate more rapidly ; the force of the sun's direct rays ; the walking, which made us breathe heavily ; and, most marked of all, the force of the wind, which, piercing us through and through, emptied our lungs, dried up our saliva, and deprived our skin of its natural moisture.

I added that there was no danger ; but that the enemy being known, we must take steps to defeat him ; and it was accordingly resolved that we should drink at regular intervals of half an hour.

Even this precaution was insufficient, however, and that thirst remained invincible ; not wine, nor water, nor wine-and-water, nor brandy-and-water were of any avail. We were thirsty even while we drank, and thoroughly miserable the whole day long. However, the day came to an end, like any other ; the proprietor of the farm of *Latour* offered us hospitality, and supple-

¹ The name given to *Londoners* who have never left their city ; it is equivalent to the Parisian *badaud*.

VIII. On Thirst

mented our provisions with much of his own. We made a wonderful meal, and soon sought his hayloft, there to enjoy the most delicious sleep.

Next day, my theory received the seal of experience. The wind died down during the night ; and although the sun was even hotter and brighter than the day before, we none the less shot for some hours without serious thirst.

But the greatest harm was already done ; our flasks, although we had been careful to fill them before setting out, were unable to withstand the frequent attacks which we made upon them ; they were left like bodies without souls, and we fell into the snares of the local publicans.

There was no other course : but we did not give in without a murmur, and I hurled a speech full of invective at that desiccating wind, when I saw that a dish worthy of royal tables, a dish of spinach in quails' fat, must be washed down with a wine hardly better than Suresnes.¹

¹ *Suresnes*, a pretty village two leagues from *Paris*. It is famous for its vile wines. There is a saying, that to drink a glass of Suresnes wine, three persons are required : he who drinks, and two acolytes to hold him up and cheer him when his heart begins to fail. The same is said of the wine of *Périeux* ; but people drink it notwithstanding.



IX. On Drinks¹

52. THE word *drink* is used of any liquid which can mingle with our food.

Water appears to be the most natural drink. It is found wherever there are animals, it takes the place of milk among adults, and is no less necessary to us than air.

Water

WATER is the only drink which absolutely quenches thirst, and this is the reason why it can only be drunk in comparatively small quantities. Most of the other liquors which man absorbs are but palliatives, and if he had confined himself to water, it would never have been said of him that one of his privileges was to drink without being thirsty.

Rapid Effect of Drinks

DRINKS are absorbed into the animal economy with extreme ease; their effect is prompt, and the relief which they bring

¹ This chapter is purely philosophical; a detailed account of the many known drinks could not be included in my work as I had planned it; such an account would go on for ever.

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almost instantaneous. Lay a substantial meal before a weary man, and he will eat with difficulty and be little the better for it at the moment. Give him a glass of wine or brandy, and immediately he feels better, so that you see a new man before you.

A remarkable occurrence, of which my nephew, *Colonel Guigard*, told me, lends weight to this theory. My nephew is no teller of tales by nature, and his veracity is not to be questioned.

He was at the head of a detachment returning from the siege of *Jaffa*, and they had reached a point within a few hundred paces of a halting-place where water was to be had, when dead bodies began to be found by the roadside ; they were the corpses of soldiers belonging to a detachment a day's march in front of my nephew's, who had died of the heat.

Among the victims of that burning climate was a carabineer, known to several of my nephew's men. He had been dead, as it appeared, not less than twenty-four hours, and the sun, beating down upon him throughout the day, had turned his face as black as a crow.

Some of the men approached the body, whether to look upon their comrade for the last time, or to make themselves his heirs, if there was anything to inherit ; when they were astonished to find his limbs still flexible, and even a little warmth left in the neighbourhood of the heart.

'Give him a drop of *sacré-chien*,' said the wag of the company ; 'I'll lay odds that unless he's gone a very long way into the other world he'll come back for a taste of that.'

And sure enough, at the first spoonful of spirits, the dead man opened his eyes ; everyone cried out in amazement ; and after a little rubbing of his temples and a second dose of liquor, he was able, with some assistance, to mount an ass and keep his seat.

Thus they led him to the well ; during the night he was carefully tended, and given a few dates to eat, with other light refreshment ; and the following day, still mounted on the ass, he reached *Cairo* with the rest.

53. A THING most worthy of remark is the species of instinct, Strong as general as it is imperious, which leads us in search of strong Drinks

Wine, the pleasantest of drinks, whether we owe it to *Noah*,

Gastronomical Meditations

who planted the vine, or to *Bacchus*, who pressed juice from the grape, dates from the childhood of the world ; and beer, which is attributed to *Osiris*, goes back to a time beyond which nothing certain is known.

All men, even those whom it is customary to call savages, have been so tormented by this lust for strong drinks, that they have in the end procured them in some form or other, however limited the extent of their knowledge.

They have made sour the milk of their domestic animals, or extracted juice from fruits and roots which they suspected of containing the elements of fermentation ; and in every period and clime, throughout the whole history of social intercourse, we find men fortified with strong liquors, which they use at their feasts, sacrifices, marriages, or funerals, and in short upon all great occasions either of merry-making or solemnity.

Wine was drunk and its praise sung through many ages before men saw the possibility of extracting the spirituous part which makes its strength ; but when the *Arabs* taught us the art of distillation, which they had invented for the purpose of extracting the scent of flowers, and above all that of the rose, so celebrated in their writings, then men began to believe that it was possible to discover in wine the cause of its exalted savour and its strange influence upon the organ of taste ; and so, by little and little, first alcohol, then spirits of wine, then brandy were discovered.

Alcohol is the prince of liquids, and transports the palate to the highest pitch of exaltation ; its various preparations have opened up new sources of delight¹ ; it invests certain medicaments with a power which they could not otherwise have attained² ; and it has even become a formidable weapon in our hands, for the nations of the New World have been subdued hardly less by brandy than by firearms.

The method by which alcohol was discovered has led to other important results ; for consisting, as it does, in the separation and exposure of the parts which make up the whole, and distinguish that whole from all other bodies, it has served as a model to such as pursue analogous researches ; and they have brought to our knowledge substances entirely new, strychnine, quinine, morphine, and many others, both discovered and to be discovered in the future.

Truly, this thirst for a kind of liquid round which nature

¹ Liqueurs.

² Elixirs.

IX. On Drinks

wrapped so many veils, this strange desire that assails the whole race of men, in every zone and climate of the world, is most worthy to be taken note of by philosophers.

I, among others, have pondered it, and am disposed to place the desire for fermented liquors, which is unknown among animals, by the side of doubts concerning the future, which they likewise know not, and to regard both as distinctive attributes of the masterpiece of the last sublunary revolution.



X. On the End of the World

54. I HAVE said, *the last sublunary revolution*, and far and far have that thought and that expression carried me.

Indubitable signs inform us that our globe has suffered many an absolute change, each no less than an *end of the world* ; and an instinct, not to be explained, warns us of further revolutions still to come.

Many times already it has been believed that such catastrophes were close at hand, and there are those now living whom the watery comet, foretold by good *Jérôme Lalande*, sent hurrying to the confessional.

From what has been said upon the matter, men are prone to invest the catastrophe with vengeance and destroying angels, trumpets and many terrible accessories.

Alas ! there is need of no such stir for our destruction : we are not worthy of so much pomp ; and if the Lord so wills, He can change the face of the globe without the help of any such gear.

Let us suppose, for example, that one of those errant stars, whose course and mission are alike unknown, and whose appear-

X. *On the End of the World*

ance man has always hailed with such dismay ; let us suppose, I say, that some comet passes close enough by the sun to be charged with superabundant heat, and approaches near enough to ourselves to cause for the space of six months a temperature of 170 degrees (as hot again as that which marked the appearance of the comet of 1811).

At the end of that fatal season, all living things, both animal and vegetable, will have perished, all sound will have died away ; the earth will revolve in silence, until new circumstances bring forth new germs ; and the cause of disaster will be lost in the endless fields of the air, and will never have been nearer than some millions of leagues away.

This course of events, which is no less probable than another, has always seemed to me an admirable theme of speculation ; and I have approached it without flinching.

It is curious with the mind's eye to follow that ascensional heat, to foresee its gradual action and effects, and to ask :

Quid during the first day, and the second, and so on to the last ?

Quid upon air, earth, and water, upon the formation, intermixture, and explosion of gases ?

Quid upon man, in relation to age, sex, strength, and weakness ?

Quid upon obedience to the law, submission to authority, respect for property and persons ?

Quid upon the means sought to escape, or the attempts made to combat the danger ?

Quid upon the bonds of love, friendship, parentage, upon selfishness and devotion ?

Quid upon religious sentiment, faith, resignation, hope, etc. ?

History will throw some light on the moral influence likely to be felt ; for the end of the world has been more than once foretold already, even to a day.

Indeed, I feel some regret in not describing to my readers how I have ordered the whole course of things in my wisdom, but I would not deprive them of the pleasure of reaching their own conclusions : an occupation which will shorten the hours of a sleepless night, or smooth the way for their daily *siesta*.

Great danger looses all bonds. When the yellow fever was raging in *Philadelphia* in 1792, husbands were seen to shut the door upon their wives, children deserted their parents, and many another strange thing came to pass,

Quod a Nobis DEUS AVERTAT !



XI. On Gourmandism

55. I HAVE consulted all the dictionaries upon the word *Gourmandism*, and am far from satisfied with what I find. There is endless confusion between *gourmandism*, properly so called, and *gluttony*, or *voracity* ; whence I conclude that the lexicographers, good men though they be in all other respects, are not to be numbered among the choice band of scholars who munch a partridge wing with easy grace, and wash it down, little finger in air, with a glass of *Clos Vougeot* or *Lafitte*.

They have forgotten, utterly forgotten, social *gourmandism*, wherein the elegance of *Athens*, the luxury of *Rome*, and the delicacy of *France* come together and are made one, which to profound design brings skilled performance, and tempers gustative zeal with wise discrimination : a precious quality, which might well be termed a virtue, being certainly the source of all our purest joys.

Definitions

LET us then define and make our meaning clear.

Gourmandism is an impassioned, a reasoned, and an

XI. On Gourmandism

habitual preference for that which gratifies the organ of taste.

Gourmandism is the enemy of excess ; indigestion and drunkenness are offences which render the delinquent liable to be struck from off the rolls.

Gourmandism includes *friandism*, which is but the same preference applied to light, delicate, and unsubstantial food, to pastry and preserves, etc. It is a modification introduced in favour of the ladies and men who resemble them.

From whatever point of view gourmandism is considered, it is deserving of nothing but praise and encouragement.

Physically considered, it is the result and proof of the sound and perfect condition of the organs of nourishment.

Morally considered, it denotes implicit obedience to the commands of the Creator, Who, when He bade us eat that we might live, gave us the inducement of appetite, the encouragement of taste, and the reward of pleasure.

CONSIDERED in its relation to political economy, gourmandism is the common bond which unites the nations of the world, through the reciprocal exchange of objects serving for daily consumption.

Advantages
of Gour-
mandism

It causes wines, spirits, sugar, spices, pickles, and provisions of every kind, down to eggs and melons, to cross the earth from pole to pole.

It determines the relative price of things mediocre, good, and excellent, whether their qualities are the outcome of art or the gift of nature.

It sustains with hope and the spirit of rivalry the great host of fishermen, huntsmen, farmers, and the rest, who daily fill the most exacting market with the result of their labours and discoveries.

And lastly, it forms the livelihood of all the busy throng of cooks, confectioners, bakers, and others of all descriptions concerned with the preparation of food, who in their turn employ other labour for their own needs, which causes a circulation of money incalculable as to movement and total quantity by the most expert brains.

And it is especially to be remarked that the industry which has gourmandism for its object offers this peculiar advantage, that it depends on the one hand upon the longest purses, and on the other upon the continually recurring needs of every day.

Gastronomical Meditations

In the present state of society it is difficult to conceive a race which could live on bread and vegetables alone. Such a race, did it exist, would infallibly be at the mercy of any carnivorous army, like the *Hindoos*, who have never resisted an invasion ; or else it would be converted by the skill in cookery of its neighbours, like the *Bæotians* of old, who turned gourmands after the battle of *Leuctria*.

More
Advantages

56. GREAT, too, is the fiscal importance of gourmandism ; toll-gate, customs-barrier, and all methods of indirect taxation thrive upon it. All that we consume pays tribute, and gourmands before all men are the mainstay of the nation's wealth.

What shall we say of the innumerable cooks who for centuries past have left the shores of *France* to exploit the gourmandism of other lands ? They nearly all succeed in their endeavours, and in obedience to the instinct which never dies in a *Frenchman's* heart, bring back to their native soil the fruits of their economy. This access of wealth is more considerable than might be supposed, and they too, like all others, are roots of a genealogical tree.

Surely, if nations were grateful, none more justly than *France* would raise altars and a temple to Gourmandism.

Power of
Gourmand-
ism

57. IN 1815, under the Treaty of November, *France* was required to pay seven hundred and fifty millions to the Allies in three years.

A further condition required her to meet the individual claims of the inhabitants of the various enemy countries, which being assessed by the sovereigns of those countries in conjunction, amounted to more than three hundred millions.

Finally, to this must be added the requisitions of all kinds made by the enemy generals, which they carried off in cartloads to the frontiers, and the cost of which had later to be defrayed out of the public purse ; in all, a sum of fifteen hundred millions.

Not without reason, fears were entertained lest such considerable payments, which were made day by day *in bullion*, might put an intolerable strain upon the exchequer, and cause a depreciation of fictitious values, followed by all the misery which overwhelms a penniless country deprived of the means of borrowing.

'Alas,' said those who had anything to lose, as they watched the fatal tumbril going to be loaded up in the *rue Vivienne*, 'alas,
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the whole of our money is emigrating ; next year, we shall go down on our knees before a crown piece ; we shall be ruined and brought to beggary ; all enterprise will be hopeless, there will be no borrowing possible, and we shall be faced with famine, plague, and civil death.'

Events gave the lie to their predictions, and, to the amazement of all students of finance, the payments were made with ease, credit improved, loans were oversubscribed, and during the whole period of *superpurgation* the rate of exchange, that infallible index of the circulation of money, remained in our favour ; in other words, it was mathematically proved that more money was coming into *France* than going out of it.

What was the power which came to our aid ? What divinity performed this miracle ?

Gourmandism.

When the *Britons* and the *Germans*, the *Teutons*, *Cimmerians*, and *Scythians* poured into *France*, they brought with them a rare voraciousness, and stomachs of no ordinary capacity.

Nor were they long content with the official cheer forthcoming from forced hospitality ; they aspired to daintier delights ; and very soon the queen of cities became one vast refectory. In restaurants, in hotels, in taverns, cookshops, and in the very streets, the intruders ate.

They stuffed themselves with meat, fish, game, truffles, pastry, and most of all with our fruit.

Their thirst was as boundless as their appetite ; and they always asked for the most expensive wines, in the hope of discovering unheard-of joys, which they were forthwith astounded not to experience.

Superficial observers knew not what to think of this endless and unhungry feasting ; but the true *Frenchman* laughed and rubbed his hands, saying, ' Lo, they are under a spell, and will have paid us back more crowns by to-night than the Government handed over to them this morning.'

It was a golden time for all who minister to the pleasures of taste. *Véry* made a fortune ; *Achard* laid the foundations of one ; *Beauvilliers* amassed his third, and *Mme Sulot*, whose shop in the *Palais-Royal* measured only twelve feet square, sold twelve thousand tarts a day.¹

¹ The army of invasion, on its way through *Champagne*, took six hundred thousand bottles of wine from the far-famed cellars of *M. Moët*, at *Épernay*. He soon found consolation ; for the pillagers acquired a taste for his wines, and the orders which he receives from the North have more than doubled since that time.

Gastronomical Meditations

The influence of those days has lasted ; foreigners without end arrive from every part of *Europe*, eager to resume in time of peace the pleasant habits which they acquired during war ; they must needs come to *Paris* ; and when they are there, they must indulge their tastes, no matter what the cost. And if our funds are in favour, it is owing, not so much to the high rate of interest which they carry, as to the instinctive confidence which everyone inevitably feels in a people in whose midst gourmands are happy.¹

Portrait of a Fair Gourmand 58. GOURMANDISM is by no means unbecoming in women ; it agrees with the delicacy of their organs, and makes amends, in some degree, for the pleasures which they must needs forgo, and the ills to which nature seems to have condemned them.

There is no more charming spectacle than a fair gourmand under arms : her napkin is prettily tucked in ; one hand rests on the table ; the other conveys to her mouth delicately cut morsels, or a wing of partridge for her teeth to sever ; her eyes are bright, her lips like cherries, and all her movements full of grace ; nor does she lack the grain of coquetry which women show in everything that they do. With such advantages she is irresistible, and not *Cato the Censor* himself could look on her unmoved.

Anecdote BUT here a bitter memory obtrudes.

One day, being placed next to the fair *Mme M—d* at dinner, I was inwardly rejoicing at my good fortune, when suddenly turning to me, 'Your health,' said she. Thereupon I began a neat reply, suitable to the occasion ; but the words died away on my lips ; for the coquette turned away towards her left-hand neighbour, and him she begged to drink with her. They touched glasses ; and that piece of perfidy, for it seemed no less to me, left a wound in my heart which many years have not availed to heal.

Women are Gourmands THERE is something instinctive in the addiction to gourmandism which prevails among the fair sex, for gourmandism is favourable to beauty.

¹ The calculations upon which this chapter is based were furnished by *M. M . . . B . . .*, an aspirant to gastronomical distinction, who is not without proper qualifications, being a financier and an amateur of music.

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A series of exact and rigorous observations has proved that a succulent, delicate, and well-ordered diet long delays the outward and visible signs of old age.

It lends new brilliance to the eyes, new bloom to the skin, and new strength to the muscles ; and as it is certain, physiologically, that depression is the cause of wrinkles, those dread foes of beauty, so it is no less true to say that, other things being equal, those who know how to eat are ten years younger than those to whom the science is a mystery.

Painters and sculptors have long been aware of this truth ; they never represent a miser or an anchorite, or any being who makes a choice or duty of abstinence, but they give him the pallor of sickness, the wasted frame of poverty, and the wrinkles of decrepitude.

59. GOURMANDISM is one of the principal bonds of society ; for it is gourmandism that gradually draws out that spirit of fellowship which daily brings all sorts together, moulds them into a single whole, sets them talking, and rounds off the angles of conventional inequality. Social Effects
of Gour-
mandism

It inspires, too, the efforts of each good amphitryon to entertain his guests, and the gratitude of his guests when they perceive what pains have been taken on their behalf ; and this is the place to cry eternal shame on those doltish eaters who swallow down the choicest dainties with criminal indifference, or carelessly and sacrilegiously absorb the limpid fragrance of the rarest nectar.

General Law.—The most ingenious triumphs demand explicit eulogy ; but wherever the desire to please is evident, to say a word of praise is but common courtesy.

60. FINALLY, gourmandism, when it is shared, has the most marked influence upon the happiness attainable in the married state. Influence of
Gourmand-
ism upon
Conjugal
Happiness

Let the twain be gourmands, and at least once a day they have occasion to enjoy each other's company ; for even those who sleep apart (and there are many such) eat at the same table ; they have a theme of conversation which never grows stale, for they talk not only of what they are eating, but of what they are about to eat, what they have met with on the tables of their acquaintances, fashionable dishes, new inventions, etc., etc. ; and such table-talk is full of charm.

Gastronomical Meditations

Music, doubtless, has strong attractions for those that love it ; but it must be played, and the playing demands effort. A cold, moreover, or a lost music-book, a headache, or an instrument out of tune, such trivial and frequent accidents are fatal to it.

But a common need calls man and wife to table, and the same inclination keeps them there ; they are naturally attentive to each other, and show, by their courtesy, a mutual wish to please ; the manner in which meals are conducted is an important ingredient in the happiness of life.

This last piece of wisdom, which is new to *France*, did not escape the English moralist, *Richardson* ; he enlarges upon it in his novel *Pamela*, where he describes the different way in which two married couples end their day.

The two husbands are brothers ; one, the elder, is a peer enjoying full possession of the family estate ; the other, and younger, is the husband of *Pamela*, disinherited on account of his marriage, and living upon the proceeds of his half-pay in circumstances not far removed from poverty.

The peer and his lady enter their dining-room from opposite doors, and greet each other coldly, although it is their first meeting of the day. They sit down to a lavishly spread table, surrounded by lackeys gleaming with gold ; they are served in dead silence, and eat without zest. However, when the servants withdraw, a kind of conversation ensues between them ; but soon restraint breaks down ; she turns shrewish, and the pair rise from table infuriated, to seek separate rooms, where each meditates the sweets of the widowed state.

The younger brother, on the contrary, upon reaching his humble lodging, is welcomed with tender effusion and the softest of caresses. He sits down to a frugal board ; but the excellence of his meal is none the less assured, for has not *Pamela* herself prepared it ? They eat with unfeigned delight, talking meanwhile of their affairs, their projects, and their love. A half-bottle of Madeira serves to prolong both meal and talk ; and then one bed receives them, and sweet sleep crowns the bliss of mutual love, bringing forgetfulness of the present and dreams of better days to come.

All honour then to gourmandism, such as we describe it to our readers, and so that it turns not man away from his necessary labours nor his inheritance ! For even as the vices of *Sardanapalus* have not made women to be loathed, so the excesses of

XI. On Gourmandism

Viellius need cause no man to turn his back upon a wisely ordered feast.

When gourmandism becomes gluttony, greed, and gross indulgence, it loses both its name and its advantages ; it is then no longer within our province, but enters into the moralist's, who will shame it with his censures, or the doctor's, who will cure it with his drugs.

La gourmandise, as the Professor has defined it in this chapter, has no name but in French ; it cannot be rendered by the Latin *gula*, nor the English *gluttony*, nor the German *Lüsternheit* ; and therefore we counsel those who may be tempted to translate this pithy work to retain the word unchanged ; so have all nations done with *la coquetterie* and the words derived from it.

NOTE BY A PATRIOTIC GOURMAND

I remark with pride that coquetry and gourmandism, those two great modifications born of extreme sociability in response to our most pressing needs, are both of French origin.



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Not all who
would be,
can be
Gourmands

61. THERE are individuals from whom nature withholds either the organic delicacy, or the power of concentration, essential to the due appreciation of the most succulent dish.

Physiology has long since recognised the first of these two classes, and has shown that certain tongues are ill provided with the nervous fibres whose function it is to absorb and appreciate savours. They can convey to their unhappy owners none but a dim sensation, and are to taste what blind eyes are to light.

The second class is made up of the absent-minded, the garrulous, the busybodies, the ambitious, and all who seek to do two things at once, and only eat to fill their bellies.

Napoleon

OF such was *Napoleon* ; he was irregular in his meals, and a quick and careless eater. But in him it was but one more instance of the absolute will-power which he brought to bear on all that he undertook. As soon as appetite announced its needs, they must be satisfied upon the instant ; and the

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resources of his kitchen were such that anywhere and at any time he had only to say the word, and a fowl, cutlets, and coffee could at once be placed before him.

BUT there is also a privileged class of persons who actually ^{Born} receive a material and organic summons to the enjoyments of Gourmands taste.

I have always been a good *Gallist* and *Lavaterian*, and I believe in inborn tendencies.

If there are individuals who have evidently come into the world to see badly, to walk badly, or to hear badly, because they are myopic, lame, or deaf, why should there not be others who are predisposed to an acuter perception of certain sensations ?

Again, the most unobservant of us cannot but have remarked, from time to time, physiognomies which bear the unmistakable imprint of some dominant idiosyncrasy, such as contemptuous indifference, self-satisfaction, misanthropy, sensuality, etc., etc. It is true that these qualities may exist and leave no mark upon the features ; but when the mark is there, it rarely lies.

The passions act upon the muscles ; and very often, though a man is silent, the different thoughts which fill and agitate his brain may be read upon his countenance. And this muscular tension, if it becomes ever so little habitual, will in the end leave visible traces, and so give a permanent and recognisable character to the physiognomy.

62. THE destined heirs of gourmandism are usually of middle height ; they have round or square faces, bright eyes, small foreheads, short noses, full lips, and well-rounded chins. Women so endowed are buxom, rather pretty than beautiful, and not without a tendency to become fat ; the sweet-toothed having finer features, a more delicate mien, neater figures, and above all, a very special way with their tongues.

Sensual Pre-
destination

Such is the exterior beneath which to seek convivial perfection ; for these are the guests who sample every dish, eat slowly, and pause reflectively between one mouthful and the next. They are never in haste to leave the place where they have found true hospitality ; and they are welcome throughout the evening, because they know all the games and pastimes appropriate to gastronomical gatherings.

Those, on the contrary, from whom nature has withheld the legacy of taste, have long faces, and long eyes and noses ;

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whatever their height, there is something elongated in their proportions. Their hair is dark and unglossy, and they are never plump ; it was they who invented trousers.

The women whom nature has likewise afflicted are angular, easily bored at table, and only live for cards and scandal.

This physiological theory will, I hope, find few opponents, for everyone can verify it among his own acquaintance ; but I am going, nevertheless, to support it by actual examples.

One day I was a guest at an important dinner, and seated opposite to me was a very pretty girl whose face was unmistakably sensual. I turned to my neighbour, and whispered to him that with such features it was impossible but that this young person must be a great gourmand.

'What nonsense !' he replied ; 'she cannot be above fifteen years old, and that is not the age of gourmandism. . . . However, let us observe. . . .'

The opening moves were against me, and I began to tremble for my reputation ; for during the first two courses the young lady's discretion was such as to fill me with amazement, and I was afraid that I had come upon one of the exceptions which exist for every rule. But at last came dessert, a rich and varied dessert, which revived my waning hopes. Nor was I deceived this time ; for not only did she eat of every dish which was offered to her, she even asked for dishes to be brought from the farthest ends of the table. By the end she had left nothing untasted ; and my neighbour marvelled that that little stomach could hold so many things. So was my diagnosis justified ; and science triumphed once again.

Two years later, I again met the same person ; it was a week after her marriage ; she had developed, to her further great improvement ; she had begun to loose the darts of coquetry, and, displaying all the charms that fashion allows to be revealed, she was ravishing. Her husband was a picture to behold ; he was like a ventriloquist, who can laugh in one direction and weep in the other ; that is to say, he seemed glad that his wife was so much admired, but no sooner did some amateur show signs of being in earnest than he was visibly tortured with the pangs of jealousy. The latter sentiment prevailed ; he bore off his wife to a distant room, and that, for me, was the end of her biography.

On another occasion, I made a similar remark about the *Duc Decrès*, who was so long Minister of Marine.

XII. On Gourmands

It will be remembered that he was a fat, short, dark-complexioned, curly-haired, and square-built man, with a round face, prominent chin, thick lips, and the mouth of a giant ; so I pronounced him on the spot a predestined amateur of good cheer and fair women.

Very gently, very softly, I breathed this physiological verdict into a pretty, and, as I believed, a discreet woman's ear. Alas ! I was deceived. She was a daughter of *Eve*, and my secret would have choked her. And so, that same evening, his Excellency had word of the scientific inference which I had drawn from his face and person.

This I learned next day, when I received a very courteous letter from the Duke, modestly disclaiming the two qualities—worthy ones enough—that I had discovered in him. I did not admit defeat ; I replied that nature does nothing purposeless ; that she had clearly marked him out for certain missions ; that if he should not fulfil them, he would disobey her stern decree ; and that finally I had no right to address him in terms so personal, etc., etc.

There the correspondence closed ; but not long afterwards all *Paris* learned, through the news-sheets, of the memorable fight which took place between the Minister and his cook, a prolonged and hard-fought battle, in which his Excellency had not always the upper hand. Now, if after such an exploit the cook was not dismissed (and he was not), I may fairly draw the conclusion, I believe, that the Duke was absolutely dominated by the talents of that great artist, and that he despaired of finding another who could gratify his taste so perfectly ; else he never could have overcome the repugnance which he must have felt, at being served by so bellicose a henchman.

I was writing these lines, one fine winter evening, when *M. Cartier*, in his day first violin at the Opera, and a nimble demonstrator, came into my room and sat down by my hearth. I was full of my subject, and looking closely at him, 'Dear Professor,' I said, 'how comes it that you are no gourmand, when you have all the appearance of one ?'

'I was a great gourmand once,' he replied, 'but now, I abstain.'

'Was it the course of wisdom ?' I inquired.

He made no answer, but heaved a sigh of *Walter Scott*-like depths, a sigh that was very like a groan.

Gastronomical Meditations

Gourmand
Professions 63. IF the fates make gourmands of some men, others attain gourmandism by grace of their calling ; and mention must here be made of four great strongholds of the science : finance, medicine, letters, and the cloth.

Finance FINANCIERS are the heroes of gourmandism. *Heroes* is the proper word, for there was a fight ; and the nobility would have crushed the financiers beneath the weight of their titles and escutcheons, had not the financiers countered with their strong-boxes and sumptuous tables. Cooks strove with genealogists, and although dukes did not wait to take their leave before they laughed at their amphitryons, they had come as their guests, and their presence was proof of their defeat.

All who with ease amass large fortunes are almost bound to become gourmands.

Unequal conditions produce unequal wealth, but unequal wealth is not accompanied by unequal needs : and a man who could every day afford a dinner large enough for a hundred persons is often more than satisfied when he has eaten a leg of chicken. Gourmandism is therefore summoned to use all its wiles, and the shadowy appetite must be recruited with new dishes which sustain without distressing it, and soothe without surfeiting. So it was that *Mondor* turned gourmand, and all the others who have since followed his example.

In all the lists of recipes to be found in the most elementary cookery books, there are always some bearing the designation, *à la financière*. And it is well known that in the past not the king, but the farmers-general, ate the first green peas of the season, paying always eight hundred francs for the dish.

Things are not otherwise in our own day ; and still the tables of finance claim nature's rarest perfection, the most precocious hot-house fruits, the choicest stratagems of the art ; nor are personages the most historical too proud to be guests at banquets having such allurements.

Medicine 64. CAUSES no less powerful, albeit of a different nature, act upon the medical profession ; they are gourmands by seduction, and would need to be made of bronze in order to resist the force of circumstances.

The dear doctors are the more welcome wherever they go, because health, which is under their patronage, is the most precious thing in the world ; and so they rapidly become spoilt children.

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Always anxiously awaited, they are sure of the most flattering reception. A pretty patient summons them ; youth greets them with caresses ; a father, a husband surrenders his dearest to their care. Hope turns their right flank, gratitude their left ; they are fed at the beak like pigeons, and must needs submit ; in six months the habit is upon them, and they are gourmands past redemption.

I dared to expound these views one day, being present, myself the ninth, at a dinner presided over by *Doctor Corvisart*. 'You,' I cried in the inspired tones of a puritan seer, 'you are all that is left of a host which once overspread all *France*. Alas ! The members thereof are all scattered and laid low ; no more farmers-general, no more abbés, no more chevaliers nor white monks. Yourselves alone are now the whole body gustative. Bear your mighty burden with fortitude, even though you meet the fate of the three hundred *Spartans* at *Thermopylæ* !'

I spoke, and there was no murmur of revolt ; we acted in due consequence, and the truth remains.

At that dinner, be it added, I made an observation worthy to be propagated.

Doctor Corvisart, the most amiable of men when he chose, drank no wine but iced champagne. And in the early stages of the meal, while we others were fully occupied with eating, he was vociferous and full of tales and anecdotes. At dessert, however, when all other tongues began to be loosened, he turned serious, taciturn, and at times morose.

From this circumstance, and others of a similar nature, I draw the following conclusion : *The Wine of Champagne, which is an excitant in its first effects (ab initio), is stupefying in those which follow after (in recessu) ;* and these, moreover, are notoriously the effects of carbonic acid gas, which is a prime ingredient of champagne.

65. WHILE doctors are my theme, I wish before I die to raise Objurgatory my voice against the barbarous severity which they use towards their patients.

The initial misfortune of falling into their hands is the prelude to a whole series of defensive struggles, and the renunciation of all the minor joys of life.

I rise to protest against the greater part of their bans and vetoes, as being useless.

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I say *useless*, because the sick are almost never inclined to eat what would do them harm.

A rational doctor ought never to lose sight of the natural tendencies of his patients, nor to forget that if distressing sensations are by nature injurious, pleasant ones are equally wholesome. A little wine, a spoonful of coffee, a few drops of spirits, have been known to bring back smiles to the most hippocratical countenances.

And what is more, let them be well assured, these bedside tyrants, that their prescriptions are almost always ineffectual ; the patient seeks to avoid complying with them, and his friends are ready with all manner of reasons to strengthen him in his resolve ; and the death-rate varies not at all in consequence.

The ration of a sick *Russian*, in 1815, would have made a strong porter of the Paris market drunk, and the English ration would have laid a *Limousin* low. Yet there was no escaping the full dose, for military inspectors incessantly patrolled our hospitals, and enforced both issue and consumption.

I publish my opinion with the more confidence, because it is founded on numerous proved facts, and because the best practitioners are becoming reconciled to my system.

Canon Rollet, who died some fifty years ago, was a hard drinker, following the custom of those ancient days : he fell sick, and the first words of the doctor laid a ban on all use of wine. Nevertheless, on his very next visit, he found his patient in bed, and beside him what was almost a complete *corpus delicti*, to wit, a table covered with a snow-white cloth, a crystal goblet, a noble bottle, and a napkin ready to wipe the lips withal.

At the sight of these things he fell into a monstrous rage, and spoke of withdrawing from the case, when the poor canon cried in doleful tones, ' Ah, but, doctor, recollect that when you forbade me the use of wine, you never cut me off from the joy of seeing the bottle.'

The doctor who attended *M. de Montluc* of *Pont-de-Veyle* was far more cruel still ; he not only laid his ban upon wine, but even ordered his poor patient to drink water in large doses.

Soon after the tyrant's departure, *Mme de Montluc*, solicitous to uphold authority and assure her husband's return to health, brought him a large glass of the purest and most limpid water.

The sick man took it in his hand with all docility, and set himself resignedly to drink ; but after one mouthful he stopped,

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and gave the glass back to his wife, saying, 'Take it, my dear, and keep it for another time ; I have always heard it said that medicine must not be wasted.'

66. IN the empire of gastronomy, the territory of literature is Letters hard by that of medicine.

In the reign of *Louis XIV* men of letters were drunkards ; they conformed with fashion, and on this point the memoirs of the time are highly edifying. Nowadays they are gourmands, a notable change for the better.

I am far from sharing the opinion of the cynic *Geoffroy*, who declared that if modern works are lacking in force, it is because authors drink nothing but sugar-and-water.

I hold, on the contrary, that he fell into a twofold error, and was mistaken both as to fact and consequence.

The present day is rich in talents ; it may be, indeed, that their very multitude is a disadvantage ; but posterity, passing judgment more calmly, will find much to admire, even as we ourselves have given their due to *Racine* and *Molière*, who were but coldly received by their contemporaries.

Never was the position of writers in society more gratifying. They live no more in those lofty regions which were once their shame ; the fields of literature are grown more fertile ; the springs of *Hippocrene* now run all spangled with gold ; an author is the equal of any man, and hears no more the voice of patronage ; and to crown his happiness, gourmandism loads him with her dearest favours.

Authors are invited everywhere out of esteem for their talents, and because their talk has customarily a special flavour ; it has become the fashion for each social set to keep its man of letters.

These gentry always arrive a little late, when they are all the more welcome because they have been missed ; their tastes are carefully studied, to make them come again, and the rarest dainties are administered to them, to make them sparkle ; until, finding the treatment altogether natural, and growing accustomed to it, they become, and for ever remain, gourmands.

The length to which these practices are carried has not escaped the ferret eyes of scandal ; and it has been noised abroad that such an author allowed himself to be seduced, that such and such preferments were the issue of certain savoury pies, and that the lock of the temple of immortality had been picked with a fork. But there wags the tongue of malice, and the

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noise thereof soon ceases to be heard ; what is done is well done, and I only make mention of it here to show that I am conversant with every aspect of my subject.

The Cloth 67. FINALLY, the ranks of the devout hold many faithful votaries of gourmandism.

We mean by the *devout* what *Louis XIV* and *Molière* meant, that is to say, those whose whole religion consists in outward practice ; we are not here concerned with pious and charitable folk.

Let us see how the call came to them. Of all who seek the salvation of their souls, the greater number choose the smoothest path ; those who shun the habitations of men, sleep on boards, and clothe themselves in sackcloth, have always been exceptions and must always be so.

Now, there are things unequivocally damnable and never to be countenanced, such as dancing, the theatre, gaming, and other pastimes of a like nature.

While these and such as practise them are held in abomination, enter gourmandism, very guilefully and with most theological features.

By right divine man is king of nature, and for him was all the produce of the earth created. For him the quail grows fat, for him is Mocha coffee fragrant, for him sugar is the food of health.

How then shall the proffered goods of Providence not be used, so it be with moderation, and especially if we continue to look on them as perishable things, and above all if they increase our gratitude towards the Author of all things ?

Such reasons are supported by others no less cogent. Can those who guide our souls, and keep us in the way of salvation, be too well received ? Shall not meetings to so excellent an end be made a pleasure, and by those very means more frequent ?

Sometimes, too, the gifts of *Comus* come unsought ; it may be a college memory, or the gift of an old friendship, a penitent that would humble himself, a new-found cousin, or a debt gratefully repaid. How shall such offerings be refused ? And how shall the recipient not match them in his turn ? It is no more than the barest necessity.

Moreover, it has ever been so.

The old conventual abbeys were very stores of all that is

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most toothsome ; and this is the reason why certain amateurs so sadly mourn their dissolution.¹

More than one of the monastic orders made a special practice of good cheer, notably that of *Saint Bernard*. The cooks of the clergy have further extended the boundaries of their art ; and when *M. de Pressigny*, who died Archbishop of *Besançon*, came back from the conclave which had nominated *Pius VI*, he said that the best dinner which he ate in *Rome* was given by the General of the Capuchins.

68. WE cannot bring this chapter to a more fitting close than by making honourable mention of two orders which the Revolution made an end of, but which we ourselves saw in all their glory ; we refer to the chevaliers and the abbés. What gourmands they were, the dear fellows ! It was impossible to mistake those widespread nostrils, staring eyes, glistening lips, and salient tongues ; yet each class had its special way of eating.

There was something military in the method of the chevaliers ; they handled every mouthful with dignity, went to work very calmly, and darted horizontal glances of approval first at the master of the house, then at the mistress.

The abbés, on the contrary, doubled themselves up over their plates ; their right hand curled like a cat's paw snatching chestnuts from the fire ; their physiognomy was all bliss, and their gaze fixed and concentrated in a manner easier to imagine than to describe.

As three-quarters of the present generation have never seen anything quite like these abbés and chevaliers, and as some knowledge of them is indispensable for the right understanding of many books written in the eighteenth century, we shall borrow from the author of the *Historical Essay on the Duel*² certain passages which leave nothing to be desired on the subject. (See the *Varieties*, No. 20.)

69. As a pendant to the present chapter, I am more than happy to be able to give to my readers a piece of good news, namely, that good cheer is far from being injurious to health, and that under equal conditions gourmands live longer than the rest of

¹ The best liqueurs in *France* were made at *La Côte* by the Visitandines ; the Sisters of *Niort* first preserved angelica ; the orange-flower cakes of the Sisters of *Château Thierry* were known far and wide, and the Ursulines of *Belley* possessed a recipe for comfits of undreamed of delicacy.

² *Brillat-Savarin* was himself the author of this Essay.—[Translator's Note.]

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mankind. I only say what was arithmetically proved in a masterly paper lately read by *Doctor Villermet* at the Academy of Science.

He compared the various classes in which good cheer is habitual with those which are ill nourished, traversing the social scale from top to bottom. He further compared the various quarters of *Paris* one with another, the richer with the poorer ; and wide divergencies undoubtedly exist in this respect, as, for example, between the *Faubourg Saint-Marceau* and the *Chaussée-d'Antin*.

Finally, the Doctor carried his researches into the rural parts of *France*, and compared them with reference to the fertility of the soil ; and everywhere he obtained the same result, that mortality diminishes in proportion to increased means of nourishment, and hence that those whose unhappy lot it is to be ill nourished, may at least be sure that death will the sooner set them free.

The degree of variation is found to be such, that in the most favourable conditions only one individual in fifty dies in one year, whereas in the most poverty-stricken communities the rate becomes one in four for the same space of time.

It is not that those who enjoy the best of good cheer never fall sick ; alas, no, they too sometimes fall into the clutches of the Faculty, who are accustomed to distinguish them by the name of *good patients* ; but as they have received a stronger dose of vitality, which strengthens and preserves their constitutions, nature has more resources to fall back upon, and the body offers an incomparably stronger resistance to the process of destruction.

This physiological truth is further borne out by history, which informs us that on every occasion when imperative circumstances, such as war, sieges, or unseasonable weather have brought about a shortage in the means of nourishment, the consequent distress has always been accompanied by contagious disease and a great increase of mortality.

The *Lafarge* insurance scheme, which all *Parisians* will remember, would doubtless have prospered, had its promoters based their calculations upon the theories expounded by *Doctor Villermet*.

They calculated the rate of mortality according to the tables of *Buffon*, *Parcieux*, and others, which are all based on figures taken from among all classes and all ages of a population. But

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as persons who invest capital against future needs have in general escaped the dangers of childhood, and are accustomed to a wholesome and well-regulated diet, *death did not yield the expected harvest*, and the speculation proved a failure. There were doubtless contributory causes, but none so elementary and inevitable.

For this observation we are indebted to *Professor Pardessus*.

M. du Belloy, Archbishop of Paris, who lived to be nearly a hundred years old, possessed a splendid appetite ; he loved good cheer, and more than once have I seen his patriarchal countenance light up on the appearance of some special dish. *Napoleon* at all times treated him with marked deference and respect.



XIII. Gastronomical Tests

70. WE have seen in the preceding chapter that the distinctive character of those whose claim to the honours of gastronomy is least substantial, consists in their dull-eyed and phlegmatic bearing when the best of cheer is set before them.

They are unworthy to have treasures lavished upon them, the worth of which they cannot apprehend ; and it seemed to us imperative to be able to know them for what they are. Accordingly, we sought means of acquiring the needed information, which is of extreme importance alike for the estimation of men and the recognition of good guests.

We gave ourselves up to the inquiry with that diligence which knows no failure, and here and now we place the fruits of our perseverance at the disposal of the honourable brotherhood of amphitryons ; we refer to our discovery of *gastronomical tests*, a discovery which will do honour to the nineteenth century.

By *gastronomical tests*, we mean dishes of known savour and such indisputable excellence, that the sight of them alone must rouse all the gustative powers of a man of right constitution ;

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whence it follows that in such a case all those in whose countenance no kindling of desire is seen, nor any glow of ecstasy, can justly be marked down as unworthy of the honours of the occasion and the pleasures thereto pertaining.

The method of the tests, duly weighed and examined in supreme council, was inscribed in the golden book, and in a language which knows no change, as follows :

'Utrumque ferculum, eximii et bene noti saporis, appositum fuerit, fiat autopsia convivæ; et nisi facies ejus ac oculi vertantur ad ecstasim, notetur ut indignus.'

Which was translated by the sworn translator of the supreme council, as follows :

*'*Whosoever a dish of known and very special savour shall be set upon the board, the guests shall be closely scrutinised, and those whose countenance proclaims no rapture shall be marked down as unworthy.*'*

The power of the tests is relative, and they must be suited to the faculties and habits of the different classes of society. Every circumstance must be weighed, and each test duly calculated to cause admiration and surprise ; it is a sort of dynamometer, increasing in force as it mounts into the higher regions of society. Thus, the test prepared for a man of humble means, a resident in the *rue Coquenard*, for example, would answer imperfectly upon a well-to-do shopkeeper, and would have no effect at all at a dinner given to a chosen few by a financier or minister of state.

In the enumeration which we are about to make of dishes which have been raised to the dignity of tests, we shall begin with those adjusted to the lowest pressure ; we shall then gradually ascend, to illustrate our theory, in such a way that not only may our readers turn it to their own advantage, but each may invent new theories upon the same principle, give his name to them, and make use of them in that state of life to which chance has called him.

At one time it was our intention, by way of justifying our choice, to append recipes for composing the various preparations which we include as tests ; but in the end we refrained, for we considered that it would do an injustice to the various books which have appeared on the subject, notably that of *Beauvilliers*, and the recently published *Cook of Cooks*. We shall therefore content ourselves with referring our readers to these volumes, as well as to those of *Viard* and *Appert*, in the latter of which,

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be it added, certain scientific views are put forward, hitherto absent from works of such a nature.

It is much to be regretted that the public may not enjoy the tachygraphical account of what was said before the council, when it sat in conclave upon the tests. The proceedings are wrapt in mystery, and must remain so ; but there is at least one circumstance which I am free to disclose.

A member¹ spoke in favour of negative tests, or tests by privation.

Thus, an accident destroys some admirable dish ; a basket of game, for example, which should have arrived by the mail, is delayed, whether in fact or by supposition ; on receipt of this distressing news, note would be taken of the guests, and the gradual clouding of their brows carefully observed ; by which means a reliable scale of gastric sensibility would certainly be obtained.

But this proposal, seductive as it seemed on first sight, broke down under closer examination. The president observed, and with absolute justice, that such an occurrence, while acting but superficially upon the debased organs of the dullard, might exercise a deadly influence upon the true believer, and even cause a fatal seizure. And so, despite some insistence on the part of its author, the motion was unanimously rejected.

We shall now proceed to enumerate the dishes which we have judged proper to be used as tests ; we have divided them into three series, in a gradually ascending scale, according to the order and method indicated above.

GASTRONOMICAL TESTS

First Series

Presumed Income : £200 (mediocrity)

A choice fillet of veal, basted with rich lard and cooked in its own gravy ;

A farm turkey, stuffed with Lyons chestnuts ;

Fat caged pigeons, larded and suitably cooked ;

Eggs *à la neige* ;

A dish of *Sauerkraut*, garnished with sausages, with a crown of smoked Strasbourg bacon.

Expression : ' Ha, this looks good ; come on, we must do it justice.'

¹ *M. Felix Sibuet*, whose classic features, refined taste, and administrative talents well qualify him to become the perfect financier.

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Second Series

Presumed Income : £600 (ease)

- A rosy-hearted fillet of beef, well larded and cooked in its own gravy ;
- A haunch of venison, gherkin sauce ;
- A boiled turbot ;
- A choice leg of mutton *à la provençale* ;
- A truffled turkey ;
- Early green peas.

Expression : ' Dear friend, what a lovely apparition ! This is indeed a feast of feasts.'

Third Series

Presumed Income : £1200 and upwards (wealth)

- A seven-pound fowl, crammed and made spherical with Périgord truffles ;
- A vast Strasbourg *pâté de foie gras*, in the shape of a bastion ;
- A great Rhine carp *à la Chambord*, richly decked and garnished ;
- Truffled quails *à la moelle*, extended upon buttered toast, with chopped thyme bruised into the butter ;
- A stuffed and basted pike, bathed in creamy crayfish sauce *secundum artem* ;
- A well-hung roast pheasant, basted *en toupet*, lying in state on toast dressed *à la Sainte Alliance* ;
- A hundred early asparagus, of the thickness of five or six threads, osmazome sauce ;
- Two dozen ortolans *à la provençale*, as described in *The Secretary and the Cook*.

Expression : ' Ah, Monsieur (or Monseigneur), what an admirable man your cook must be ! One never meets such things anywhere but here ! '

If a test is to produce its full effects without fail, it must be administered in generous doses ; experience, founded upon knowledge of mankind, has taught us that the rarest and most succulent dish loses its influence, when it is not served in exuberant proportions ; for the first emotion of the recipient is checked by a suspicion that his portion is begrudged him, or

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even, in certain situations, by the fear of being obliged to refuse the dish altogether, out of politeness ; a predicament that frequently arises at the tables of pretentious misers.

I have had more than one opportunity of gauging the effect of gastronomical tests ; but a single example must here suffice.

I was invited to a dinner of gourmands of the fourth degree, at which only two of the profane were present, my friend *Revenax* and myself.

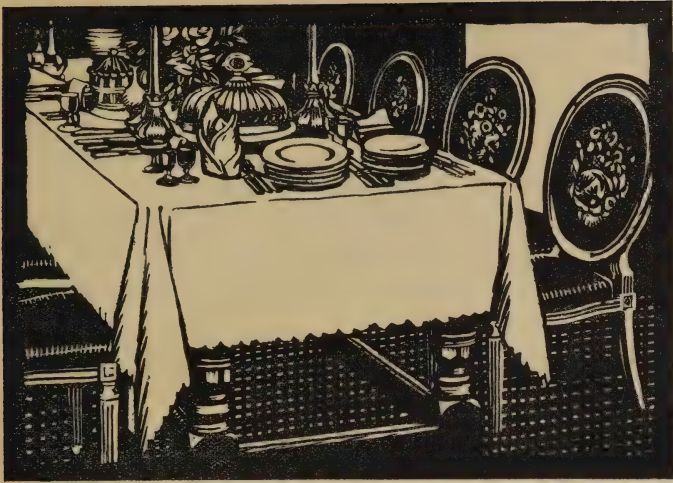
Following an entirely admirable first course, there appeared a huge Barbezieux cockerel,¹ and a Gibraltar-rock of Strasbourg *foie gras*.

These apparitions at once produced a marked but almost indescribable effect upon the company ; perhaps I shall best indicate its nature by borrowing the expression ' silent laughter ' from *Cooper* ; I felt certain that my habit of observation was about to be rewarded.

Nor was I deceived ; all talk ceased on the instant, a sure sign that hearts were full to overflowing ; the skilful movements of the carver held every eye ; and when the loaded plates were handed round, I saw successively imprinted upon every countenance the glow of desire, the ecstasy of bliss attained, and the perfect calm of utter satisfaction.

¹ Men of authority have assured me that the flesh of cockerels, if not tenderer, is at least more succulent than the flesh of capons. My many activities in this world below have prevented me from putting their assertion to the test ; and I must ask my readers to do so for themselves. But I believe we may assume the truth of it beforehand, for there is an element of sapidity in the first, inevitably wanting in the second.

A witty woman once said to me that she was able to tell gourmands by their pronunciation of the word good, in such phrases as ' That 's good, that 's very good, ' etc. ; she declared that adepts instil into that one short monosyllable an accent of truth, tenderness, and enthusiasm, such as degraded palates can never hope to attain.



XIV. On the Pleasures of the Table

71. It is certain that more pain is felt by man than by all the other sentient creatures which inhabit our globe.

Nature early condemned him to spend his days in suffering, through the nakedness of his skin, the formation of his feet, and the instinct of war and destruction, which is everywhere and at all times found implanted in the human race.

From this curse animals are immune ; and without such fighting as is caused by the instinct of reproduction, pain would be unknown to most species : whereas man, whose pleasures pass so swiftly, and only act upon a small number of organs, may at all times, and through every part of his body, be subjected to intolerable pain.

Moreover, fate's decree has been made the harsher in its execution, by reason of the many ills caused by the habits of social life ; until the keenest and most satisfying of imaginable pleasures can never, either in intensity or duration, yield compensation for the agony attendant upon certain maladies, such

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as gout, toothache, rheumatic ague, and strangury, or upon the fearful tortures practised in certain lands.

And it is the fear of pain which causes man, albeit unconsciously, to seek opposite extremes, and to cling so fondly to the few pleasures which nature has placed within his reach.

For the same reason he adds to their number, improves, perfects, and finally adores them ; for under the pagan system, and during many centuries, all the pleasures were secondary divinities, under the patronage of superior gods.

The severity of new religions put an end to those personages ; *Bacchus* and *Diana*, *Love* and *Comus* now only haunt the poet's page ; but the thing survives, and still, under the strictest of all faiths, there is mirth and feasting at marriages, baptisms, and even funerals.

Origin of
the Pleasures
of the Table

72. MEALS, in the sense which we attach to the word, began with the second age of man ; that is to say, as soon as he ceased to live wholly on fruits. The dressing and apportioning of meat necessarily brought each family together, when the father distributed the produce of his hunting among his children, and later, the children, growing up, performed the same office for their aged parents.

Those gatherings were at first confined to close relations, but gradually came to include friends and neighbours.

Later, when the race of man was spread over the face of the earth, the weary traveller would find a place at those primitive meals, and tell his news of far-off lands : so hospitality was born, with rites held sacred by every nation ; for the most savage tribe strictly bound itself to respect the life of him who had eaten of its own bread and salt.

The meal may be held responsible for the birth of languages, or at least for their elaboration, not only because it was a continually recurring cause of meetings, but also because the leisure which accompanies and succeeds the meal breeds confidence and loquacity.

Difference
between the
Pleasures of
the Table
and the
Pleasure of
Eating

73. SUCH, in the nature of things, must have been the origin of the pleasures of the table, which must be carefully distinguished from their necessary antecedent, the pleasure of eating.

The pleasure of eating is the actual and direct sensation of a need that is supplied.

The pleasures of the table are reflex sensations, born of the

XIV. *On the Pleasures of the Table*

various circumstances of fact, place, things, and persons attendant upon a meal.

The pleasure of eating is common to ourselves and the lower animals, and depends on nothing but hunger and the means to satisfy it.

The pleasures of the table are peculiar to mankind, and depend on much antecedent care over the preparation of the meal, the choice of the place, and the selection of the guests.

The pleasure of eating requires, if not hunger, at least appetite ; the pleasures of the table, more often than not, are independent of the one and the other.

Both of the two conditions may be observed at any dinner.

Throughout the first course, and at the beginning of the session, each guest eats steadily, speaking not a word and deaf to anything which may be said ; whatever his position in society, he frankly forgets all else but the performance of the great work. But when actual need begins to be satisfied, then the intellect awakes, talk becomes general, a new order of things is apparent, and he who hitherto was a mere consumer of food becomes a table companion of more or less charm, according to the qualities bestowed on him by the Master of all things.

74. THERE is neither rapture, nor ecstasy, nor any extreme Effects transport of bliss in the pleasures of the table ; but they make up in duration what they lose in intensity, and above all possess the peculiar merit of inclining us towards all other pleasures, or, in the last resort, consoling us for the loss thereof.

In short, at the end of a good dinner, body and soul alike enjoy a wondrous sense of well-being.

As to their physical effects : new vigour fills the brain, the wrinkles of care are smoothed away, colouring is heightened, eyes grow brighter, and a grateful warmth pervades the limbs.

As to their moral effects : wits are sharpened and imagination fired, words take wings, and conversation sparkles ; and if *La Fare* and *Saint-Aulaire* go down as witty authors to posterity, it will be chiefly owing to the inspiration of good cheer.

Again, it often happens that there may be seen, round a single table, all the modifications which extreme sociability has introduced into our midst : love, friendship, business, speculation, influence, patronage, solicitation, ambition, intrigues ; thus

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does the festive board join all extremes, and for this reason it bears fruits of every flavour.

Industrial
Accessories

75. IT is not to be wondered at, that man made use of all the resources of industry to add to the duration and intensity of the pleasures of the table.

Poets complained that the neck, being too short, curtailed the pleasure of degustation ; others bewailed the small capacity of the stomach ; and it became the fashion to rid that organ of the necessity of digesting a first meal, in order to obtain the pleasure of forthwith swallowing a second.

This last was man's supreme effort to increase the joys of taste ; but when it was found impossible to transgress the limits set by nature, he turned to the accessories, which offered wider scope for his ingenuity.

Bowls and cups were decked with flowers, and the guests crowned with roses ; there was banqueting beneath the vault of heaven, in gardens and leafy dells, amid all the marvels of nature.

To the pleasures of the table music and the sound of instruments lent new charms, as when the court of the king of the *Phæacians* sat feasting, and the singer *Phenius* sang to them of the deeds and warriors of old.

Often dancers, mimes, and jugglers, of either sex and variously clad, brought occupation to the eyes without detracting from the joys of taste ; subtle perfumes floated on the air ; and sometimes beauty, all unveiled, would pour the wine, till all the senses were regaled together.

I could fill many pages with matter in support of my theme. The Greek and Roman authors, and our own old chronicles, are there ready to be transcribed ; but scholars have ransacked them already, and my slender learning would make a poor show by comparison ; I therefore accept and reaffirm what others have proved ; a right which I often claim, and which the reader should be glad to grant me.

Eighteenth
and Nine-
teenth
Centuries

76. By these various means, more or less elaborate according to circumstances, man sought pleasure ; and to them we have added such others as have been revealed by new discoveries.

It is true that convention is too nice, in these days, to tolerate the Roman vomitory ; but we have done better, and the same end is now attained in a way that bears the seal of good taste.

XIV. On the Pleasures of the Table

New dishes have been discovered, so seductive that they infallibly and continually renew the appetite, and yet so light that they flatter the palate without ever surfeiting the stomach. *Seneca* would have said, *nubes esculentas*.

Indeed, we are so far gone in alimentary lore, that if the need of going about our business did not compel us to leave the table, and if sleep never claimed its portion of our time, meals could be prolonged indefinitely, and there would be no apparent means of estimating the period which might elapse between the first sip of *Madeira* and the final glass of punch.

It must not be supposed, however, that such arts are indispensable to the pleasures of the table. Those pleasures may be tasted almost to the full, whenever the four following conditions are found united : passable food, good wine, pleasant companions, and sufficient leisure.

Thus I have often thought, how gladly could I have partaken of the frugal meal which *Horace* offered to his neighbour, or to the chance guest driven by rough weather to seek the shelter of his roof ; a plump chicken, a kid (doubtless well fattened), and for dessert, raisins, figs, and nuts : on these, as it seems to me, and wine pressed when *Manlius* was consul (*nata mecum consule Manlio*), with the talk of that sweet poet for accompaniment, I could have supped with all imaginable satisfaction :

*Ac mihi seu longum post tempus venerat hospes,
Sive operum vacuo gratus conviva per imbrem
Vicinus, bene erat non piscibus urbe petitis,
Sed pullo atque hædo ; tum¹ pensilis uva secundas
Et nux ornabat mensas, cum duplice ficu.*

Not otherwise, to-day or to-morrow, shall three pairs of chosen friends fare admirably upon a leg of mutton, boiled, and *Pontoise* kidneys, washed down with wine of *Orléans* and most limpid *Médoc* ; and thereafter, crowning the feast with sweet, unfettered talk, they shall utterly forget that finer dishes or more subtle cooks exist.

And, though the fare be never so exquisite, the accessories sumptuous beyond description, there will be no table pleasures if the wine is bad, the guests collected haphazard, their faces gloomy, and the meal eaten in haste.

¹ Dessert is here clearly indicated and distinguished by the adverb *tum* and the words *secundas mensas*.

Gastronomical Meditations

Anecdote

BUT, the impatient reader will perhaps exclaim, how, in this year of grace 1825, shall a meal be so contrived as to combine all the conditions which procure your pleasures of the table in the highest degree ?

That question I am about to answer. Gather ye, O my readers, and give ear ; *Gasterea* inspires me, the prettiest of all the *Muses* ; I shall be clearer than an oracle, and my precepts will survive the passage of the years.

‘ Let the number of the guests be not less than twelve, that the talk may be constantly general ;

‘ Let them be chosen of divers occupations, but analogous tastes, and with such points of contact that the odious formalities of introduction can be dispensed with ;

‘ Let the dining-room be well lighted, the cloth superlatively white, and the atmosphere maintained at a temperature of from sixty to sixty-eight degrees ;

‘ Let the men be witty without pretension, and the women charming but not over prone to flirt¹ ;

‘ Let the dishes be few in number, but exquisitely choice, and the wines of the first quality, each in its degree ;

‘ Let the service of the former proceed from the most substantial to the lightest, and of the latter, from the mildest to the most perfumed ;

‘ Let the progress of events be slow, for dinner is the last business of the day ; and let the guests comport themselves like travellers drawing near their journey’s end together ;

‘ Let the coffee be piping hot, and the liqueurs chosen by a master-hand ;

‘ Let the withdrawing-room be large enough to allow a game at cards to be arranged for such as cannot do without, yet still to leave space for colloquies apart ;

‘ Let the guests be willingly detained by the pleasures of social intercourse, and sustained by hope that the evening will not pass without some ulterior joy ;

‘ Let the tea be not too strong, the toast craftily buttered, and the punch mixed with all due care ;

‘ Let the retreat begin not earlier than eleven o’clock, but by midnight let all be abed.’

Whoever has been present at a meal uniting all the conditions above enumerated, may claim to have witnessed his own

¹ I write in *Paris*, between the *Palais-Royal* and the *Chaussée-d’Antin*.

XIV. On the Pleasures of the Table

apotheosis ; and for each of them which shall be forgotten or ignored, the price is a proportionate decrease of pleasure.

I have said that the pleasures of the table, such as I describe them, may be enjoyed at no small length ; and this I will prove by giving the true and circumstantial history of the longest meal I ever ate in my life ; 'tis a sweet which I place in the reader's mouth, as a reward for his kind reception of my book.

There used formerly to live, at the lower end of the *rue du Bac*, a certain family composed as follows : the doctor, aged seventy-eight ; the captain, aged seventy-six ; and their sister *Jeannette*, aged seventy-four. They were my cousins, and always welcomed me most kindly when I went to see them.

'*Parbleu !*' said *Doctor Dubois* to me one day, raising himself on tip-toe, and dealing me a blow on the shoulder, 'you are always boasting of your *fondues* (eggs broiled with cheese), till our mouths water at the thought of them ; we will stand it no longer. One of these days we are coming to breakfast with you, the captain and I, to find out what they really are.' (It was in 1801, if I remember, that he thus playfully assaulted me.)

'Most willingly,' I replied ; 'and you shall have one in all its glory, for I'll make it myself. Your proposal fills me with joy. Let it be to-morrow, at ten o'clock, military time.'¹

At the stated time my two guests appeared, newly shaved and carefully combed and powdered ; two little old men, still hale and well set up.

They smiled with pleasure when they saw that all was ready—the white cloth, the three places laid, and at each place two dozen oysters, with a bright golden lemon in their midst.

Two tall bottles of *Sauterne* stood at the two ends of the table, carefully wiped save for the corks, which told in no uncertain manner of the lapse of many years since their insertion.

Alas for the gay breakfasts of the old days, when oysters were swallowed by the million ! I knew them in their prime, and now they are no more ; they went out with the abbés, who always ate at least a gross, and the chevaliers, who went on eating them for ever. Yes, I regret them, but philosophically ;

¹ Whenever a rendezvous is so announced, the first dish should be on the table as the clock strikes ; and all late comers are looked on as deserters.

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if time can change governments, what powers has it not over simple customs !

After the oysters, which proved admirably fresh, came grilled kidneys, a jar of truffled *foie gras*, and then the *fondue*.

The ingredients were at hand in a chafing-dish, which was placed on the table over a spirits-of-wine burner. I officiated on the field of battle, and none of my movements escaped the notice of my cousins.

They surrendered wholly to the charms of the dish, and besought me to give them the recipe ; this I promised to do, telling them meanwhile two pertinent anecdotes, which the reader will perchance encounter in another place.

After the *fondue* came fresh fruit and sweetmeats, a cup of right Mocha made *à la Dubelloy* (which method was then beginning to be known), and finally two different kinds of liqueur, a detergent spirit and a soothing oil.

Breakfast being over, I proposed a little exercise, in the form of a tour round my house, which, though far from elegant, is both vast and comfortable ; and its ceilings and gilding, which date from the middle of the reign of *Louis XV*, made a perfect setting for my guests.

I showed them the clay original of the bust of my fair cousin, *Mme Récamier*, by *Chinard*, and her portrait in miniature by *Augustin* ; they were both so overcome, that the doctor must needs press his fat lips to the portrait, while the captain made so free with the bust that I was forced to chastise him ; for if all the admirers of the original were to do likewise, that rounded bosom would soon be reduced to the condition of *Saint Peter's* toe at *Rome*, which the faithful have quite worn away with kisses.

Next I showed them some casts after the best antique sculptors, my pictures, which are not without merit, my guns and musical instruments, and some fine editions of French and foreign authors.

Nor, in the course of this polymathical excursion, did they forget my kitchen. There they saw my economical stock-pot, my Dutch-oven, my clockwork turn-spit, and my steamer. They examined all with minute attention, finding it the more marvellous in that their own kitchen was unaltered since the days of the Regency.

We were no sooner back in the drawing-room than the clock struck two. '*Peste !*' exclaimed the doctor, 'it is dinner-time, 138

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and sister *Jeannette* will be waiting for us. We must go home at once ; not that I feel the slightest pang of hunger, but I want my soup for all that ; it is a habit of long standing, and whenever I let a day go by without taking it, I say with *Titus*, "*Diem peridi.*"

'My dear doctor,' I replied, 'why go so far in quest of what is close at hand ? I will send word to your sister that you are staying with me, and that you are going to give me the pleasure of your company at dinner ; though, to be sure, I must ask you to be indulgent, for the meal which I shall offer you will lack the full merit of an *impromptu* composed at leisure.'

At this speech of mine the two brothers resorted to ocular consultation, the outcome of which was a formal acceptance of my invitation : whereupon I despatched a *volante* to the *Faubourg Saint-Germain*, and spoke words of wisdom to my master cook ; and ere long, what between his own resources and those of neighbouring restaurateurs, he served us up a very neat and appetising little dinner.

I was filled with satisfaction when I saw the zest and readiness with which my two friends took their seats at table, tucked in their napkins, and prepared for action.

They met with two surprises, the novelty of which to them I had not foreseen ; for I gave them Parmesan with their soup, and a glass of dry Madeira after it. Both had been recently imported by *M. le Prince de Talleyrand*, the first of diplomats, to whom we are indebted for so many choice flowers of wit, and who at all times, whether at the height of power or in retirement, commands the closest interest of the nation.

The dinner was an unqualified success, both as to its substantial part and the accessories ; and the gaiety of my friends was a clear proof of their enjoyment.

After dinner, I proposed a game of piquet ; but no, said the captain, they preferred the *far niente* of the *Italians* ; and accordingly we drew our chairs up to the fire.

Now, despite the charms of the *far niente*, I have always held that nothing makes for ease of conversation so much as some occupation of a trivial kind ; and so I proposed tea.

Tea was something quite strange to a *Frenchman* of the old school ; nevertheless, they consented to try it. I made it in their presence, and they drank three or four cups apiece, with the more relish in that up till then they had never looked upon it as anything but a form of medicine.

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Long experience had taught me that one surrender begets another, and that he who once sets out along the path of acceptance ends by forgetting how to refuse. And so in accents not far short of imperative I talked of winding up with a bowl of punch.

‘But you will kill us!’ said the doctor.

‘But you will make us hopelessly drunk!’ said the captain.

And for reply, I called very loudly for sugar, lemons, and rum.

I mixed the punch, and in the meantime toast had been made, thin, delicately buttered, and salted to perfection.

This time I encountered opposition. My cousins declared that they had eaten quite enough, and that they would not touch the toast. But knowing the charms of that simple preparation, I answered that my one anxiety was lest there might not be sufficient. And sure enough, it was not long before the captain took the last slice, and I caught him looking to see if any was left, or if more was being made; and more I ordered upon the instant.

Meanwhile time had not stood still, and the hands of my clock had passed the eighth hour.

‘We must fly,’ said my guests; ‘at the very least we ought to eat a dish of salad with our poor sister, who has not set eyes on us the whole day through.’

This time I made no objection; and, not forgetting the courtesy due to two such excellent old men, I saw them to their carriage, and watched them drive away.

It will perhaps be asked, whether so long a sitting was without its tedious moments?

I shall answer that it had not one; my guests’ interest was sustained throughout, by the making of the *fondue*, the tour of inspection, the novelties at dinner, the tea, and last but not least by the punch, which they had never before tasted.

Moreover, the doctor was well versed in the genealogy and reputations of all *Paris*; the captain had passed a large part of his life in *Italy*, both in the army and as envoy to the court of *Parma*; I am not untravelled myself; we conversed without pretension, and listened when it was our turn. And these conditions were more than enough to make the time pass smoothly and swiftly.

Next morning I received a letter from the doctor, in which he hastened to inform me that the little debauch of the day before had had no evil aftermath; on the contrary, he said, after a most peaceful night’s rest they had risen perfectly refreshed and ready to begin all over again.



XV. On Shooting-Luncheons

77. SURELY no circumstances are more productive of memorable meals than those which attend the sportsman's midday rest ; and of all known interludes, none can be protracted to so great a length with so little risk of boredom.

After some hours of exercise, the most energetic sportsman feels the want of relaxation ; his face has been well fanned by the morning breeze ; skill has not failed him in the hour of need ; the sun draws near the highest point in its course, and he is glad to lay aside his gun and rest awhile, not from excess of weariness, but in response to the instinct which gives all men timely warning that their energy is not inexhaustible.

A shady spot, then, takes his fancy ; soft grass receives his limbs, and the murmur of the neighbouring spring invites him to deposit in its cool waters the revivifying flask of wine.¹

Then from his knapsack, very calmly and contentedly, he takes cold chicken and golden-cruised rolls, packed for him,

¹ I commend white wine to my fellow-sportsmen ; it is less affected by movement and heat, and more pleasantly exhilarating.

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perchance, by loving hands, and lays conveniently by the wedge of Gruyère or Roquefort which is to be his whole dessert.

Nor is he alone during these preparations ; with him is the faithful brute which Heaven created to do his will ; lying by his side, the dog looks up with fond eyes at his master ; a common task has brought them closer ; they are two friends, and the servant is proud and happy to share his master's meal.

Theirs is an appetite unknown alike to the mundane, who never wait the coming of hunger, and the devout, who never take the needed exercise.

At length the delicious meal comes to an end ; each has enjoyed his share, and all has gone peacefully and with well-ordered ease. And now, for the midday hour is an hour of rest for all creation, why should not they too yield awhile to sleep ?

Such pleasures are increased tenfold when several friends partake of them together ; for doubtless then a more copious repast will have been brought in military canteens, now turned to the softer uses of peace. How sweet the talk of prowess and missed chances, and the golden prospects of the afternoon !

And what if trusty henchmen now draw near, bearing vessels sacred to *Bacchus*, wherein are cunningly confined Madeira cold as ice, and juices of the strawberry and pineapple, delicious liqueurs, divine concoctions, that send a stream of rapture coursing through the veins, and fill the senses with a bliss unknown to the profane ?¹

Yet even now, we have not reached the end of this enchanted progress.

The Ladies 78. THERE are days when our wives and sisters, our cousins and their pretty friends, are invited to join in our pastimes.

At the appointed hour come light carriages and prancing steeds, bearing beauty gay with flowers and plumes : there is

¹ It was my friend, *Alexandre Delessert*, who first made use of this most admirable device. We were shooting at *Villeneuve*, under a broiling sun, with the thermometer at 90° in the shade. So situated within the torrid zone, he had had the foresight to cause *potophorous* * servitors to follow hard upon our footsteps, who bore, in leathern buckets lined with ice, all that could be desired in the way of comfort and refreshment. Each made his choice, and felt new life spring up within him. I am inclined to think that the application of so cold a liquid to arid tongues and parched throats causes the most delicious sensation that may be tasted with a clear conscience.

* *M. Hoffmann* condemns this expression on the score of its resemblance to the phrase *pot-au-feu* ; he is in favour of the better-known alternative, *ætophorous*.

XV. On Shooting-Luncheons

something military and also coquettish in the ladies' toilette ; and here and there the keen eye of the Professor catches glimpses for which chance alone cannot be held responsible.

And soon the flank of each calash gapes wide, revealing treasures of *Périgord*, marvels of *Strasbourg*, toothsome sweets from *Achard's*, and all portable triumphs of the most cunning laboratories.

Nor have the potent charms of champagne been forgotten ; it sparkles merrily in beauty's hand ; all sit down upon the soft grass and fall to ; corks fly, and there is such laughing, talking, and unfettered mirth as befits a meal with the universe for dining-room and the sun's rays for illumination. And appetite, that heavenly emanation, lends a zest unknown within doors, all luxury and embellishments notwithstanding.

But all things must have an end ; and at length the host gives the signal ; the men take up their guns again, the ladies their hats. Farewells are spoken, the carriages drive off, and beauty vanishes, to be seen no more until the close of day.

Such scenes have I witnessed in the higher regions of society, by the waters of *Pactolus* ; but lavishness is far from indispensable.

I have shot in the central parts of *France* and the remotest country places ; I have seen charming women and damsels radiant with the fresh bloom of youth come gaily to the rendezvous in hired cabs, or simple country carts, or mounted on the humble ass which is the glory and fortune of the inhabitants of *Montmorency* ; I have seen how they were the first to laugh at the discomfort of their conveyances ; I have seen them spread upon the greensward turkey in transparent jelly, home-made pies, and salad ready for the mixing ; I have seen them dance light-footed round the bivouac fire ; I have taken my part in the games and frolics that rightly follow such gypsy meals, and I know well that they are not less gay, less charming, nor less delightful for want of luxury.

Ah, and when the time comes to separate, why should not kisses be exchanged—with the lord of the chase, who is in his glory ; with the duffer of the party, because of his bad luck ; and thereafter with the others, to avoid all risk of jealousy ? It is the custom at parting ; are we not authorised and allowed, nay, bound to profit by it now ?

But, O my brothers of the gun, who know the value of a steady aim, shoot straight and fill your bags before the coming

Gastronomical Meditations

of the ladies ! For experience has proved that after their departure the sport is rarely fruitful.

Many are the conjectures put forward in the attempt to explain this curious effect. Some attribute it to the toils of digestion, which always bear a little heavily upon the body ; some to mind-wanderings that will not be controlled ; and some to the influence of certain whispered colloquies, which fill a man with eager longing for the homeward path.

As for ourselves,

Whose glance doth probe the inmost depth of hearts,

we believe that, sportsmen being inflammable matter, and the ladies not yet past their climacteric, it is impossible but that, when the sexes come together, some vital spark should escape to scandalise the chaste *Diana*, and cause her to withdraw her favour from the delinquent for the rest of the day.

We say *for the rest of the day*, because the story of *Endymion* shows the goddess to be anything but severe after the setting of the sun. (See the picture by *Girodet*.)

We have but touched upon this matter of shooting-luncheons, which might well form the subject of an amusing and instructive essay ; and as such we bequeath it to whichever of our intelligent readers may be willing to make it his theme.



XVI. On Digestion

79. *Man lives not on what he eats, but on what he digests*, says an old proverb. We must digest to live : rich and poor, the shepherd and the king are equal in the face of this inevitable law.

Yet how few are those who know what they are about when they digest ! Nearly all are like *M. Jourdain*, who made prose but knew it not ; and for their especial benefit I am about to describe the process in simple terms, being persuaded that *M. Jourdain* was a far happier man when the philosopher had shown him that what he made was prose.

80. APPETITE, hunger, and thirst are signs that the body is in Ingestion want of new strength ; and pain, that universal monitor, will soon torment us if we are unwilling or unable to obey those signs.

Then follow eating and drinking, which together constitute ingestion, an operation which begins when the food enters the mouth, and ends when it enters the *œsophagus*.¹

¹ The *œsophagus* is the canal which, beginning at the back of the windpipe, connects the gullet with the stomach ; the upper end is called the *pharynx*.

Gastronomical Meditations

The whole journey is but a few inches long, but much takes place before it is completed.

The solid food is first divided by the teeth ; the different glands with which the mouth is lined then moisten it ; the tongue pounds it, pressing it against the palate to squeeze out the savoury juices, and binding it into a solid mass in the middle of the mouth ; after which, obtaining purchase against the lower jaw, it lifts itself into a convex position, when the mass is drawn down the rearward slope towards the throat, and forced by the pharynx, which contracts in its turn, into the œsophagus, which by a peristaltic movement conveys it into the stomach.

When one mouthful has been thus dealt with, a second follows in the same fashion ; the drinks swallowed in the *entr'actes* take the same road, the process of deglutition continuing until the same instinct which prescribed ingestion warns us that it is time to finish. The first warning, however, is seldom obeyed ; for it is one of the privileges of man to drink when he is not thirsty, and the modern cook knows well how to make us eat when we are unhungry.

Before each morsel of food can reach the stomach, it is required to avoid two dangers ; and its manner of doing so is highly remarkable.

The first is the danger of being held back by congestion at the back of the nostrils ; but fortunately the lowering of the veil of the palate and the peculiar construction of the pharynx overcome the difficulty.

The second is the danger of being drawn into the trachea or windpipe, across which all food must pass ; and this is a far graver risk, for when any foreign body enters the trachea, the immediate consequence is a convulsive cough, which continues until the substance is expelled.

However, by means of an admirable piece of mechanism, the glottis contracts during the act of swallowing ; it is also shielded by the epiglottis, which covers it over, and we instinctively hold our breath during deglutition, so that it may be said that in general, despite this strange conformation, food reaches the stomach with no great difficulty ; and there the empire of the will comes to an end, and digestion, properly so called, begins.

Office of the 81. DIGESTION is a purely mechanical operation, and the digestive
Stomach apparatus may be likened to a mill furnished with sifters, which
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extract from food its nutritious elements, and reject the non-animalisable residue.

The exact manner in which digestion operates within the stomach, whether by coction, maturation, fermentation, or gastric, chemical, or vital dissolution, etc., has long been the subject of fierce discussion.

The truth is, no doubt, that something of all these enters into the process ; and the mistake lies in seeking to attribute to a sole agent the result of several causes operating together.

Thus, the foodstuffs, impregnated with the various fluids furnished by the mouth and œsophagus, are further soaked, when they reach the stomach, in the gastric juices with which it is always filled ; they are then subjected during several hours to a heat of more than one hundred degrees ; they are sifted and mixed by the organic movements of the stomach, which their presence excites ; they act upon one another in consequence of this juxtaposition ; and fermentation must needs take place, for the reason that every alimentary substance is fermentescible.

In the course of these operations, the chyle begins to form ; the topmost alimentary layer is the first to be appropriated, and, passing through the pylorus, falls into the intestines ; the next follows, and the next again, until nothing is left in the stomach, which may be said to be emptied by mouthfuls, exactly as it was filled.

The pylorus is a kind of fleshy tunnel, communicating between the stomach and intestines ; its construction is such that food cannot return up it without great difficulty. This important passage is liable to be blocked up, when death by starvation follows, after prolonged and terrible pain.

The intestine which receives the food at the outlet of the pylorus is the duodenum, so called because it is twelve fingers long.

The chyle, upon reaching the duodenum, enters upon a new phase, by admixture with the bile and pancreatic juices ; it now loses the greyish-white colour which it has had hitherto, turns yellow, and begins to acquire the stercoral odour, which grows stronger as the rectum is approached. The various elements of which the mixture is composed act upon one another reciprocally ; the chyle is still in process of formation, and analogous gases are necessarily formed at the same time.

The organic impulse which forced the chyle from the stomach,

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continuing, pushes it towards the small intestines ; there it is separated, absorbed by the organs concerned, and carried to the liver, to mingle with the blood and repair the losses brought about by the absorption of the vital organs and transpiratory exhalation.

It is difficult to explain how the chyle, which is a white liquid, more or less insipid and odourless, comes to be extracted from a dark mass, whose smell and flavour must be strongly pronounced. But extracted it is, and this extraction of the chyle appears to be the specific end of digestion ; as soon as it mingles with the circulation, the individual is made aware of the fact by an increase of vitality, and an intimate conviction that his losses have been repaired.

The digestion of liquids is far less complicated than the digestion of solids, and can be explained in a few words.

Their alimentary part is extracted and taken into the chyle, and goes through all the vicissitudes described above.

The purely liquid part is absorbed by the stomachic suckers and cast into the circulation ; it is then brought through the emulgent arteries to the loins, which filter and elaborate it, and by means of the ureters¹ send it into the bladder in the form of urine.

In this last receptacle the urine, although retained by a sphincter, does not long remain ; its irritant action creates a need, and very soon voluntary constriction brings it to the light of day, causing it to gush out through certain channels which we all know, but never mention by name.

Digestion occupies a longer or shorter time according to the particular disposition of individuals. But it may be given an average term of seven hours, or rather more than three hours for the stomach, and the rest for the journey to the rectum.

By means of the above explanation, which is taken from the best authors, and which I have duly purged of anatomical dryness and scientific abstractions, my readers will be able for the future to estimate the exact point at which the last meal they have eaten is to be found : namely, during the three first hours in the stomach ; thereafter, between the stomach and the intestines ; and ultimately, at the end of seven or eight hours, in the rectum, awaiting its turn to be expelled.

¹ The ureters are two ducts, of the thickness of a quill pen, which start from either loin and end within and at the back of the bladder.

XVI. On Digestion

82. Of all corporeal operations, digestion has the most powerful influence over the moral state of the individual. Influence of Digestion

Nor ought anyone to be surprised by this assertion ; for, indeed, it could not possibly be otherwise. The most elementary rules of psychology teach us that the mind can only be impressed through the medium of its subject organs, which keep it in touch with external things ; whence it follows that, when those organs are ill-conditioned, weak, or inflamed, the deterioration must needs influence the sensations, which are the intermediary and occasional means of intellectual activity.

And so our accustomed manner of digesting, with particular reference to the latter part of the process, makes us habitually gay or sad, silent or talkative, morose or melancholy, without our being aware of it, and most certainly without our being able to avoid it.

It would be possible to separate the civilised portion of mankind into three great divisions, namely, the regular, the costive, and the lax.

It can be demonstrated not only that all persons falling within any one of these three categories have similar natural dispositions, and certain propensities in common, but also that there is something approaching uniformity in the manner in which they fulfil the several missions which chance has allotted to them in their span of life.

In order to make my meaning clear, I will take an instance from the vast field of literature. I believe that authors, for the most part, owe their apparent choice of style and matter to their stomach.

Thus, according to my theory, comic poets will be found among the regular, tragic poets among the costive, and pastoral and elegiac poets among the lax ; whence it follows, that the most tearful poet is only removed from the most comic by a mere degree of digestionary coction.

It was by way of applying this principle to courage that a member of the court of *Louis XIV*, at the time when *France* was suffering from the onslaughts of *Prince Eugène of Savoy*, exclaimed, ‘If only I could loosen his bowels for one week ! I would soon make him the biggest coward in all *Europe*.’

‘Let us make haste,’ said an English general, ‘and bring our men into action while they still have some beef left in their bellies.’

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Among the young, digestion is often accompanied by a slight shivering, and among the old, by a strong desire for sleep.

In the former case, nature is withdrawing the heat from the surface to make use of it in her laboratory ; in the latter, the same motive power, enfeebled by age, is unable to support the labour of digestion and wakefulness of the senses at one and the same time.

In the initial stages of digestion, it is dangerous to make any strenuous use of the brain, and more dangerous still to indulge the cravings of the flesh. Many a man floats yearly down the stream which flows to the graveyards of the capital, because, after dining well, and sometimes by reason of dining too well, he has not been able to shut his eyes and stop up his ears.

The above observation contains a warning, even for heedless youth ; a piece of sound advice for grown men, who forget that time never stands still ; and, a penal law for all on the wrong side of fifty.

Certain persons become and remain ill-humoured throughout the period of digestion ; and then is not the time either to lay plans before them, or to ask favours of them.

Notable among such was *Marshal Augereau* ; during the hour immediately following his dinner, he was ready to slay every one, friend as well as foe.

I once heard him say that there were two individuals in the army whom the commander-in-chief was always at liberty to have shot, namely, his chief of staff and senior orderly officer. Both were present at the time : *General Chérin* made some obsequious but not unwitty reply ; the orderly officer said nothing, but probably thought no less for all that.

I was myself then attached to the Marshal's staff, and a place was always laid for me at his table ; but I rarely showed my face there, for fear of these squalls ; I was afraid lest, at a word, he might send me to do my digesting in the cells.

At that time we were at *Offenburg*, and the staff one day complained of the absence of fish and game at mess. The complaint was well founded, for it is a recognised maxim that the victor shall make good cheer at the expense of the vanquished. And so I forthwith wrote a very polite letter to the ranger of the forests, drawing his attention to the evil and prescribing the remedy.

This ranger was a tall, swarthy, dried-up old fox, who detested the sight of us, and doubtless kept us as ill supplied as possible,

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for fear lest we should take root on the estate. His reply, accordingly, was full of evasions, and for all practical purposes a refusal. The keepers had been frightened away by our soldiers ; the fishermen were out of hand ; the waters were too full, etc., etc. To which admirable reasoning I made no answer, but instead sent ten grenadiers to be lodged and boarded by him until further orders.

The ruse was successful ; two days later, shortly after day-break, a large cart drew up outside our quarters, loaded with good things ; doubtless the keepers had come back, and the fishermen returned to duty, for it contained enough fish and game to last us more than a week without stint : carp, pike, venison, woodcock . . . it was a gift from heaven.

On receipt of this peace-offering, I delivered the poor ranger from his unwelcome guests. He called upon us, when I made him see reason ; and for the rest of our stay we had only to congratulate ourselves on his good behaviour.



XVII. On Rest

83. MAN was not made to enjoy endless activity ; nature formed him for an interrupted existence, and his perceptions are bound to cease after a certain period. He may extend that period by varying the style and nature of his sensations, but continuity of existence at last leads him to desire rest. Rest leads to sleep, and sleep brings dreams.

And here we are at the uttermost bounds of humanity ; for man asleep is social man no longer ; the law protects him still, but no longer commands his obedience.

I may here appropriately insert a singular tale told to me by *Dom. Duhaget*, formerly Prior of the Carthusian Monastery at *Pierre-Châtel*.

Dom. Duhaget came of a very good Gascon family, and had served with distinction in the army ; he had been twenty years an infantry captain, and was a Chevalier of the order of *Saint Louis*. I have never known a man of more genuine piety or more engaging conversation.

‘ We had at . . . ’ (so his story began) ‘ where I was Prior

XVII. *On Rest*

before I came to *Pierre-Châtel*, a certain brother of a very melancholy humour ; a sombre character, who was known to walk in his sleep.

‘ Sometimes, in one of his seizures, he would leave his cell and return to it alone ; often, however, he lost his way and required to be led back. Doctors were called in, and prescribed various remedies ; and at the time of which I am speaking his lapses had become less frequent, and he seemed to be past the need of being kept under observation.

‘ One evening, having stayed up beyond my ordinary hour, I was at my desk, busy over some papers, when I became aware that the door of my room, from which I scarcely ever removed the key, was being opened ; and a moment later I saw this brother enter, in a complete trance.

‘ His eyes were wide open, but staring fixedly ; he wore nothing but the shirt in which he had doubtless gone to bed, and in one of his hands he held a large knife.

‘ He walked straight to my bed, the position of which he knew, and seemed to make certain, by groping with his hands, that I was in it ; whereupon he struck three blows in quick succession, so shrewdly and powerfully that the blade pierced the bed-clothes and penetrated far into the mattress, or rather the straw which served me as one.

‘ When he passed me on his way to the bed, his features were contracted and his eyebrows frowning ; when he had struck the blows, he turned round, and I saw that his face had cleared and that he wore an air of satisfaction.

‘ The glare of the two lamps which stood on my desk made no impression upon his eyes ; he went back the way he had come, opening and closing the two doors which gave access to my cell ; and I soon saw he was returning peacefully to his own.

‘ You can judge,’ continued the Prior, ‘ of the state I was in during this terrible apparition. I shuddered when I thought of the danger which I had escaped, and gave thanks to Providence ; but my emotion was such that I was unable to close my eyes once that night.

Next morning I sent for the somnambulist, and asked him without affectation what he had dreamed of the night before.

‘ He was clearly much put out by my question. “ Father,” he replied, “ I dreamed so strange a dream that I know not how to tell it you. It seems like the work of the fiend, and . . . ” “ I command you to tell it me,” said I : “ Speak the

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truth, and the whole truth." "Father," he then went on, "I was hardly in bed when I dreamed that you had killed my mother, and that her ghost came to me still bleeding, and demanded vengeance ; that I was filled with such fury at the sight that I rushed to your room like one possessed, and found you in your bed, and stabbed you where you lay. Soon after I awoke, full of loathing for my sinfulness ; and then I blessed God that so foul a crime had not been committed. . . ." "It was more nearly committed than you imagine," said I, gravely and quietly.

"Then I told him what had happened, and showed him the mark left by the blows which he had intended for me.

"At the sight of those marks he threw himself at my feet and wept bitterly, groaning over the involuntary outrage which he might have committed, and imploring me to inflict due penance.

"No," I answered ; "I shall not punish you for an involuntary deed ; but for the future I give you dispensation from the night offices, and I warn you that your cell will be locked from the outside, and only opened to allow you to attend low mass at daybreak."

If, in the circumstances from which he only escaped by a miracle, the Prior had been killed, the somnambulistic monk would not have been punished, because the murder would not have been deliberate.

Time of
Rest

84. THE general laws governing the globe which we inhabit have had their necessary influence upon the mode of existence of mankind. The alternation of night and day, which holds good over all the world, not without variations, but yet always so that one compensates the other, has naturally determined the time for action and the time for rest ; and it is likely that our life would have been other than it is, if we had had an endless day.

However, be that as it may, when a man has for a certain space enjoyed the fullness of his life, there comes a moment when he can endure no longer ; his impressionability gradually diminishes ; the best-directed attacks made upon his senses have no effect, his organs refuse what before they had most ardently desired, his soul is surfeited with sensations, and the time comes for rest.

It will easily be seen that we here speak of social man, sur-

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rounded as he is with all the comforts and resources of the highest civilisation ; for the need of rest comes far more rapidly and regularly to such as labour strenuously at desk or in workshop, travelling, fighting, shooting, or in any other sphere of activity.

In rest, as in all the restorative processes, nature, our most excellent mother, causes us to take great pleasure.

The man who rests experiences a feeling of comfort as general as it is indefinable ; he feels his arms droop of their own weight, his fibres loosened, and his brain refreshed ; his senses are at peace, his sensations dulled ; he desires nothing, and ceases to reflect ; a veil of gauze stretches before his eyes. A few moments more, and he will be asleep.



XVIII. On Sleep

85. ALTHOUGH there exist men so constituted that they may almost be said never to sleep, it is nevertheless generally true that the need of sleep is as imperious as hunger or thirst.

The forward sentries of an army often fall asleep, even in the act of throwing snuff into their eyes to keep them open ; and *Pichegru*, when *Bonaparte's* police had tracked him down, paid 30,000 francs for one night's sleep, during which he was sold and delivered up to them.

Definition

86. SLEEP is that state of torpor in which man, cut off by the forced inaction of his senses from external things, is only mechanically alive.

Sleep, like night, is preceded and followed by intermediate stages, the first of which leads to absolute inertia, the second to renewed activity.

Let us examine these two phenomena.

At the beginning of sleep, the organs of the senses little by

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little sink into inaction : first, taste ; then, a little later, sight and smell ; hearing offers more resistance, and touch, which is there to warn us, through pain, of the dangers which may befall the body, is at all times wakeful.

Sleep is always preceded by a feeling of voluptuousness : the body yields to it gladly, in the certain expectation of new strength, and the mind gives way with no less confidence, in the hope that its means of activity will be revived.

It is from lack of a right appreciation of this feeling, which is yet so positive, that men even of the highest intellect have likened sleep to death ; death, which all living creatures resist with all their might, and which is marked by symptoms peculiar to itself and abhorrent even to animals.

Like all other forms of pleasure, sleep may become a passion, for persons have been known to give three-quarters of their life to sleep ; and like all passions, it is then productive only of disastrous effects, namely, slothfulness, indolence, enervation, stupidity, and death.

The school of *Salerno* allotted only seven hours to sleep, without distinction of age or sex. This, however, is too strict a doctrine ; some allowance should be made for children necessarily, and for women in deference to their sex ; but it may be taken as a fixed law, that more than ten hours passed in bed will constitute excess.

In the initial stages of sleepiness the individual retains his will-power, and could, if he so desired, rouse himself ; nor has the eye yet lost its powers. *Non omnibus dormio*, said *Mæcenas* ; and in this condition painful certainties have dawned on many a husband. Ideas continue to obtrude, but incoherently ; faint glimmerings of sense remain, and half-formed objects seem to pass before the eyes. But this stage is of very short duration ; soon all is blotted out, all resistance overcome, and absolute sleep obtains the mastery.

What of the mind meanwhile ? It lives its separate life ; it is like the pilot of a ship becalmed, a mirror in the night-time, a lute with strings unplucked ; it awaits the spur of new activities.

Certain physiologists, and among them *M. le Comte de Redern*, aver that the mind is never inactive ; the Count in particular cites as proof his theory that, whenever a man is roused suddenly from his first sleep, he experiences the sensations of one disturbed in the midst of some important undertaking.

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This statement cannot be overlooked, and calls for close investigation.

For the rest, the state of absolute unconsciousness is not of long duration, rarely exceeding five or six hours ; by little and little the losses are made good ; an obscure feeling of existence begins to come back, and the sleeper enters into the kingdom of dreams.



XIX. On Dreams

DREAMS are unilateral impressions, and enter the mind without the help of external things. They are common enough as phenomena, but nevertheless extraordinary, and our knowledge of them is slight.

The fault lies with the scientists, who have not yet collected a sufficient body of evidence from which to draw conclusions. When they have done their duty in this respect, the dual nature of man will be better understood.

In the present state of our information, it is believed that a subtle fluid exists in our bodies, possessing certain powers by which it transmits to the brain whatever impressions are received by the senses ; and that ideas are born of the disturbance there set up by those impressions.

Absolute sleep is due to the wastage and inaction of this fluid.

We are to believe that the work of digestion and assimilation, which necessarily proceeds during sleep, makes good the loss, so that a time comes when the individual, being again in posses-

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sion of the faculties required for action, is still deprived of the influence of external objects.

Then the nervous fluid, which is by nature mobile, flows along the nerve-channels to the brain ; it makes its way to the same regions, following the same tracks, as when the individual is awake ; and thus it produces the same effects, although with less intensity.

The reason of the difference in intensity seems to me to be easily apprehended. When a man, being awake, is impressed by an external object, the sensation is exact, sudden, and inevitable ; the entire organ is in motion. But when the same impression is conveyed to him asleep, only the posterior part of his nerves is affected ; the sensation must needs be less acute and less positive : to make ourselves more clearly understood, we may put it that in the case of the waking man a shock is felt by the whole organ, while in the case of the sleeping man a slight tremor occurs in the part nearest to the brain. It is true that in voluptuous dreams nature attains her end almost as completely as when we are awake ; but this distinction is due to the difference in the organs concerned ; for little is needed to rouse the instinct of generation, and each sex is in possession of all the requisite material for the consummation of the act.

Research
necessary

87. WHEN the nervous fluid thus flows to the brain, it always passes through the filters destined for the exercise of one or other of our senses ; and hence it arouses certain sensations or series of ideas in preference to others. Thus, we seem to see when the optic nerve is affected, to hear when the auditive nerves are affected, etc. ; and it may here be noted as a singular circumstance, that the sensations experienced in dreaming are very rarely connected with taste or smell. When we dream of gardens or meadows, we see the flowers without smelling them ; when we sit down to a dream-dinner, we see the dishes, but their taste eludes us.

It would be a worthy task for any scientist to find out why two of our senses have no effect upon the mind during sleep, while the four others enjoy almost all their ordinary powers. I know of no psychologist who has attacked this problem.

We may here remark that the more internal the feelings we experience in sleep, the greater their effect. Thus, the most sensual ideas are nothing, in point of vividness, to the anguish we feel if we dream of having lost a much-loved child, or of

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being condemned to be hanged. In such cases it is possible to wake up damp with sweat or bathed in tears.

88. HOWEVER fantastic the ideas which occur to us in our sleep, they will be found, on close examination, to be recollections or combinations of recollections. In a phrase, dreams are but the memory of the senses. Nature of Dreams

Their strangeness, then, only consists in this, that the association of ideas is unusual, being exempt from the laws of chronology, convention, and time ; so that, in the last analysis, no one has ever dreamed of what was previously quite unknown to him.

We shall not be surprised by the singularity of our dreams, if we reflect that in the waking man four faculties are constantly and interdependently co-operative, namely, sight, hearing, touch, and memory ; whereas in the sleeping man each sense is abandoned to its own resources.

We may compare these two states of the brain with the case of the piano, at which a player sits, idly running his fingers over the keys, and evoking some remembered melody, to which, if he chose to employ his full power, he could fit a complete harmony. This analogy may be carried still further, if we add that reflection is to ideas what harmony is to sounds ; and that certain ideas contain other ideas, exactly as a primary sound contains secondary sounds, etc., etc.

89. BUT here, led away by the charms of my subject, I am on the confines of *Dr. Gall's* system, which teaches and upholds the multiformity of the organs of the brain. Dr. Gall's System

I ought to go no further, nor to transgress the limits which I have laid down for myself ; yet, out of pure love for this branch of science (to which it can be seen that I am no stranger), I cannot resist inserting two pertinent examples, most carefully observed by myself, which, moreover, can be the more confidently relied upon, in that there will be more than one among my readers who can corroborate them.

In the year 1790 there dwelt in a village called *Gevrin*, in the district of *Belley*, an extremely cunning merchant ; his name was *Landot*, and he had put by a pretty fortune. First Example

One day he was suddenly seized with a stroke of paralysis, so sharp that he was thought to have dropped dead. The Faculty came to his assistance, and he came to life again ; but

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not without loss, for he left behind him almost all his intellectual faculties, including memory. However, as he was able notwithstanding to move from place to place, and had regained his appetite, he was left in control of his affairs.

Upon seeing his condition, those who had had dealings with him before believed that the time had now come to take their revenge, and, under pretext of keeping him company, crowded in upon him from all sides, with proposals of buying and selling, exchange, and all the various undertakings which had formed his staple business. But his assailants met with a rude shock, and soon found that they were altogether mistaken in their man.

The old fox had lost none of his commercial cunning, and the same man who sometimes failed to recognise his servants, and even forgot his own name, was perfectly aware of the price of all commodities, and still knew the value of every acre of meadow, vineyard, and woodland within a circuit of three leagues.

On these matters his judgment remained intact ; and directly owing to their unwary approach, the greater part of those who sought to catch the sick merchant off his guard were caught themselves in the very traps they laid for him.

Second
Example

THERE lived at *Belley* a certain *M. Chirol*, who had served many years in the royal bodyguard, under both *Louis XV* and *Louis XVI*.

His intellect was fully equal to the high services which he had been called on to perform all his life ; but he had, in a supreme degree, the lust for gaming, and not only played all the old games, such as ombre, piquet, and whist, with the greatest skill, but also, when fashion brought in a new one, was master of all its subtleties after playing three hands.

Well, then ; this *M. Chirol* also was laid low with paralysis, and the stroke was so severe that he fell into a state but little removed from insensibility. Two things, however, were spared him : his digestive faculties, and his faculty for gaming.

Every day he came to the house where for more than twenty years it had been his habit to play, sat down in a corner, and stayed there motionless and somnolent, heedless of what went on around him.

When the time came to make up a game, he would be invited to take a hand ; he always accepted, and slowly dragged

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himself to the table ; and there it was soon apparent that the disease which had paralysed the greater part of his faculties had left his gaming skill quite unimpaired.

A short time before his death, *M. Chirol* gave a striking proof of the integrity of his existence as a player.

There descended upon us, at *Belley*, a Parisian banker, whose name, I think, was *M. Delins* ; he brought letters of introduction ; he was a stranger ; he was from *Paris* ; more than sufficient, in a little country town, to make everyone hasten to do all in their power to make his visit an agreeable one.

M. Delins was both a gourmand and devoted to cards. In the former character he was given ample occupation, being kept five or six hours at table daily ; in the latter he was more difficult to amuse ; he had a great fondness for piquet, and spoke of playing with six-franc counters, which far exceeded our deepest rate of play.

To overcome the difficulty, a league was formed, in which some took shares, while others refrained, according to their view of the chances ; there were two factions, one of which maintained that *Parisians* are far more knowing in such matters than provincials, while the other declared on the contrary, that every inhabitant of that great city has a grain or two of bluff in his constitution. I know not which is the truth, but the league was formed ; and to whom was the duty of defending the common purse entrusted ? To *M. Chirol*. . . .

When the Parisian banker saw that great, pale, bloodless form sidle towards the table, and sit down opposite to him, he at first thought it was a joke ; but when the spectre took up the cards, and proceeded to shuffle them with all the skill of a master, he began to believe that here was an opponent who might once have been worthy of him.

Nor was he long in discovering that what he had guessed of the past was very true of the present ; for not only in the first, but in many of the succeeding games also, *M. Delins* was beaten, overwhelmed, and so thoroughly plucked, that on his departure he had to pay out more than six hundred francs, which were scrupulously distributed among the members of the league.

Before he left, *M. Delins* came to thank us for the hospitality he had met with in our midst ; but he protested against the caducous condition of his opponent, and assured us that he never would be able to hold up his head again, after being so soundly thrashed by a corpse.

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Conclusion THE conclusion to be drawn from the two observations quoted above is simple : it is clear that the stroke which in either case unhinged the victim's brain respected that part which had been so long employed in the intricacies of cards in the one case, and commerce in the other ; and doubtless that part more than any other was in a condition to resist the stroke, because continual exercise had strengthened it, or because the same set of impressions, continually repeated, had left deeper traces on it than elsewhere.

Effects of Age 90. AGE has a marked influence upon the nature of our dreams. In childhood we dream of games, gardens, flowers, and other cheerful things ; later, of pleasures, love, strife, and marriage ; later still, of independence, travels, and the favour of princes or their representatives ; and lastly, of our affairs and worries, money, past pleasures, and friends long since departed.

Dream Phenomena 91. SLEEP and dreams are at times accompanied by strange phenomena, an investigation of which would be of service to the science of anthropology ; and with that end in view I here record three experiences of my own, selected from among the many which have befallen me in the course of a long life, during the silence of the night.

First Example ONE night I dreamed that I had discovered the secret of avoiding the law of gravity, so that it was all one to me whether my body went up or down, and I was able to do both with equal facility, according to my desire.

I found the sensation wholly delightful ; and it is not unlikely others have had the same dream, or one like it ; but, what is specially noteworthy, I can remember perfectly comprehending (or so, at least, it now seems to me) the means which had led to my accomplishment of the feat, and that they appeared so simple that I wondered why no one had discovered them sooner.

When I woke up, the explanatory part of the dream escaped me ; but the conclusion remained, and since that time it has been my firm belief that sooner or later some intellect more enlightened than mine will solve the problem.

Second Example 92. ONLY a few months ago I experienced an altogether extraordinary sensation of pleasure. It consisted in what I can

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only describe as a delightful agitation, affecting every particle of my being : a most delicious tingling, which began in the epidermis, from head to foot simultaneously, and thence penetrated to my very marrow. I seemed to see a violet flame playing round my forehead :

Lambere flamma comas et circum tempora pasci.

I calculate that the sensation, which was definitely physical, lasted not less than thirty seconds, and I awoke filled with amazement not unmixed with awe.

From this sensation, which is still vividly present in my memory, and from what has been observed by others in the case of nervous and ecstatic persons, I have drawn the following inference, that the limits of pleasure are as yet neither known nor fixed, and that there is no saying to what degree of bodily bliss we are capable of attaining. I dare to hope that in the course of centuries the physiologist will control these extraordinary sensations, and procure them at will, even as opium is used to provoke dreams, and that posterity will thereby obtain compensation for the sore anguish we are sometimes forced to undergo.

The proposition enunciated above finds some support in analogy ; for, as I have before remarked, the art of harmony, which to-day procures such vivid, pure, and eagerly sought pleasures, was entirely unknown to the *Romans* : the discovery was made not more than five hundred years ago.

93. ONE night in the year VIII (1800), having gone to bed without any remarkable antecedents, I woke up at one o'clock, an hour when I am usually in my first sleep, and found myself in a very extraordinary state of mental excitement ; my conceptions were vivid, and my thoughts profound ; the sphere of my intelligence seemed to have expanded : I sat up, and my eyes were affected with a sensation of pale, vaporous, and indeterminate light, which in no way served to make objects visible.

To judge by the crowded succession of ideas which passed rapidly through my brain, I might have been many hours in this condition ; but my clock convinced me that it was over in half an hour at the most. I was roused from it by an external influence, independent of my will, and so brought back to the things of this world.

In a moment the luminous sensation was dispelled, and I felt

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my abnormal powers shrink ; the limits of my intelligence contracted, and in a word, I became what I had been the day before. But, after I had completely waked up, my memory still retained, though in faded colours, a part of the ideas which had filled my brain.

The first concerned time : it seemed as though past, present, and future were identical and reduced to a single point, so that it had become equally simple to foresee the future and to recall the past. So much alone remained to me of my first intuition, which was partly effaced by those that succeeded it.

My attention was next directed towards the senses : I distinguished them in order of perfection, and coming to believe that we must needs possess inward as well as outward senses, I began to investigate the nature of the former.

I had already discovered three, and almost a fourth, when I came back to earth :

The first, *compassion*, which is a præcordial sensation, felt at sight of a fellow-creature's suffering ;

The second, *predilection*, which is a feeling of preference, not only for an object pure and simple, but also for everything connected with that object or reminiscent of it ;

The third, *sympathy*, which is likewise a feeling of preference, attracting two objects one to the other.

It might at first sight be thought that the two last are one and the same ; but what distinguishes them apart is that *predilection* is not always reciprocal, while *sympathy* is necessarily so.

Finally, while dwelling on *compassion*, I reached a conclusion which seemed to be unassailable, but which I might not have perceived at another time, namely, that compassion is the source of that beautiful principle, on which all laws are ultimately based,

Alteri ne facias quod tibi fieri non vis.

Do not to others what you would not have them do to you.

In conclusion, so exquisite is my recollection of the condition in which I was on this occasion, and of what I then experienced, that I would gladly, if it were possible, give all the remaining years of my life for one month of such an existence.

Men of letters will understand me more readily than other people, for there can be few of them to whom something similar has not occurred, albeit in an inferior degree.

The author is warm in bed, lying in a horizontal position,

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with his night-cap on ; he thinks of the work he is engaged upon ; his imagination grows fertile, ideas abound, expressions leap into his mind ; and since to write he must needs get up, he puts on some clothes, removes his night-cap, and sits down at his desk.

And then, suddenly, there is a change ; the ardour of his imagination cools, the thread of ideas is snapped, expressions are utterly lacking ; he is forced to seek painfully what before he had so easily found, and too often he is driven to put off the work till some more propitious day.

All which is easily explained by the effect which the change of position and temperature must produce on the brain ; and this is another instance of the influence of physical over moral.

In my analysis of the above experience I have perhaps been led too far ; but in the end I arrived at the belief that the exaltation of the *Oriental*s was in part due to the fact that, being of the Mahometan faith, they always keep their heads warmly covered ; and that it was in order to obtain the contrary effect that those who made laws for our own monks invariably impressed on them the necessity of having that part of their person shaven and uncovered.



XX. On the Influence of Diet on Rest, Sleep, and Dreams

94. LET a man rest, or sleep, or dream ; he still remains in the power of the laws of nourishment, and departs not out of the empire of gastronomy.

Theory and experience are as one in proving that the quality and quantity of food consumed wields a powerful influence over work, rest, sleep, and dreams.

Effect of
Diet on
Work

95. THE ill-nourished man cannot long withstand the strain of continuous toil ; his body sweats all over, the strength soon goes out of him, and for him rest is nothing but the impossibility of action.

If his work is of the brain, his ideas lack vigour and precision ; reflection will not knit them together, nor judgment analyse them ; his brain is soon worn out with vain endeavour, and he falls asleep on the field of battle.

I have always thought that those famous suppers at *Auteuil*,

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and those also at the hotels of *Rambouillet* and *Soissons*, must have done good to the authors of the time of *Louis XIV* ; and the cynic *Geoffroy* (if the fact were true) could not have been far wrong when he taunted the poets of the end of the eighteenth century with the sugar-and-water he believed to be their favourite drink.

In pursuit of my theory, I examined the works of certain authors known to have lived in poverty and distress ; and in truth I found no force in them, save where they were plainly stirred by consciousness of their woes, or envy, often none too well disguised.

He, on the contrary, who eats well, and repairs his losses with due judgment and discretion, can perform incredible feats of endurance.

The Emperor *Napoleon*, on the eve of his departure for *Boulogne*, worked continuously for more than thirty hours, with his council of state and the heads of different departments, taking no refreshment beyond two short meals and a few cups of coffee.

Brown makes mention of an English Admiralty clerk who, having by some mishap lost certain papers which he alone was qualified to work upon, spent fifty-two hours on end rewriting them. He never could have withstood the strain of such an undertaking, without a special diet ; and he sustained himself in the following manner : first on water, then light food, then wine, then meat broth, and finally opium.

I remember one day meeting a courier whom I had known in the army, and who was then lately returned from *Spain*, whither he had been sent express by the government (*correo ganando horas*—Sp.) ; he had completed the journey in twelve days, and a few glasses of wine, with now and then a plate of soup, were all that he consumed throughout the whole period of hard riding and sleeplessness ; and (he added) more solid fare would infallibly have left him incapable of proceeding on his way.

96. No less marked is the influence of diet upon dreams.

Effect on
Dreams

A hungry man cannot sleep ; the cravings of his stomach keep him painfully awake, and if at last weariness and weakness make him drowsy, such sleep as he has will be light, restless, and broken.

He, on the contrary, that has exceeded the bounds of discretion

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in his eating, falls fast asleep immediately ; if he has dreams, no recollection of them will remain, because the nervous fluid has been roughly forced in all directions along the sensitive ducts. For the same reason his awakening is sudden and rude ; he returns painfully to social life ; and when the effects of sleep have quite worn off, he long continues to feel the laboured workings of digestion.

It may be laid down as a general maxim that coffee drives away sleep. Custom modifies and may completely overcome this disadvantage; but it infallibly takes effect with all *Europeans* when they drink it for the first time. Certain foods, on the other hand, gently induce sleep ; such are those in which milk predominates, the entire family of lettuce, and best of all, a rennet apple eaten immediately before going to bed.

The same
continued

97. EXPERIENCE, based on innumerable observations, has proved that diet determines the nature of dreams.

In general, all foods of a mildly stimulating kind cause dreaming : such are red meat, pigeon, duck, game, and especially hare.

The same property has been found to reside in asparagus, celery, truffles, spices, and especially vanilla.

But it would be an error to suppose that these somniferous substances ought to be banned from off our tables, for the dreams which they induce are for the most part light and pleasant, and add to the length of our existence, even while it seems suspended.

There are those to whom sleep is as it were a life apart, a sort of serial romance ; they continue in one night's dream what they had begun the night before, and see in their sleep familiar faces, which they never met with in the world of reality.

Conclusions

98. THE man who has duly reflected upon his physical existence, and conducts it according to the principles by us laid down, such a man wisely and carefully prepares his own rest, sleep, and dreams.

He so orders his work as to preclude excess ; he makes it lighter by means of variation, and refreshes his faculties by short intervals of rest, which ease them without destroying that continuity of thought which is at times essential.

If, in the day-time, he has need of longer rest, he never yields to it but in a sitting position ; he staves off sleep, unless it

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comes upon him irresistibly, and above all avoids making a habit of it.

When night brings the proper hour of diurnal rest, he retires to a well-ventilated room, does not encompass himself with curtains which would force him to breathe the same air a hundred times over, and carefully avoids closing the shutters, in order that whenever his eyes chance to open, they may be soothed by whatever light is visible.

He lays his limbs on a bed slightly raised at the head ; his pillow is flaxen, and his night-cap of linen ; his chest is not weighed down with heavy blankets, and he is careful to keep his feet warmly covered.

He has eaten wisely, though refusing neither good nor excellent cheer ; drunk the best wines, and, so it be with precaution, even the most famous. At dessert his talk has been rather gallant than political, and he has made more madrigals than epigrams ; he has drunk a cup of coffee, if it agrees with his constitution, and accepted, a few moments thereafter, a spoonful of the best liqueur, simply to make sweet his mouth. In all things he has shown himself a guest worth entertaining, a distinguished amateur ; and yet he has scarcely gone beyond the limits of necessity.

His condition, then, is such that he goes to bed content with himself and all the world ; his eyes close, he dozes awhile ; then falls sound asleep, and so remains for some hours.

Soon nature has levied her tribute, and losses are repaired by assimilation. Then sweet dreams summon him to a mysterious existence ; he sees those whom he loves, resumes his favourite occupations, and is wafted to the places where he has known delight.

At length he feels sleep gradually dispelled, and returns to social life with no reason to regret lost time, because even in sleep he has enjoyed action without weariness, and pleasure unalloyed.



XXI. On Obesity

99. HAD I been a qualified doctor of medicine, I should in the first place have written a monograph on obesity ; then I should have established my empire in that side of the profession, and thus have enjoyed the twofold advantage of having only the healthiest of persons for my patients, and being daily besieged by the prettier half of mankind ; for to acquire or maintain the perfect mean between fat and thin is the life-study of every woman in the world.

What I have not done, another doctor will do : and if he is at once learned, discreet, and a man of gallantry, I predict for him miraculous success.

Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus hæres !

Meanwhile, I am going to open up the quarry ; for a chapter on obesity is strictly pertinent, in a work having man and his meals for its theme.

By *obesity* I mean that state of fatty congestion in which, without the individual being ill, his limbs by little and little

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increase in volume, and lose their pristine shape and harmony.

There is a form of obesity confined to the belly ; I have never known an example to occur among women ; for they are ordinarily of softer fibre, and obesity, when it attacks them, spares no part of their person. I call this variety *gastrophory*, and those affected by it *gastrophors*. I myself am of their number ; but although I am the bearer of a sufficiently prominent paunch, the nether part of my legs is still hard, and the sinews thereof as loosely knit as those of a blood Arab.

For all that, I have ever looked upon my paunch as a redoubtable foe ; I have conquered him, and drawn the line at majesty ; but before surrendering he fought well ; and whatever good is contained in this chapter, I owe to a struggle of thirty years' duration.

I will begin with an extract from more than five hundred dialogues I have had at one time or another, at table, with such of my neighbours as were either threatened or afflicted with obesity.

STOUT PARTY : Heavens ! What delicious bread ! Where do you get it ?

MYSELF : From *M. Limet*, in the *rue de Richelieu* : he is baker to T.R.H. the *Duc d'Orléans* and the *Prince de Condé* ; I first went to him because his shop is close by, and I keep to him because I have proclaimed him the best panificator in the world.

STOUT PARTY : I'll take a note of that ; I eat a quantity of bread, and for such rolls as these I would willingly forgo all others.

ANOTHER STOUT PARTY : Whatever are you about, swallowing the liquid part of your soup, and leaving this delicious Carolina rice ?

MYSELF : I am following a special diet.

STOUT PARTY : A precious sort of diet ! Rice is the joy of my life, together with flour, pastry, and all such things ; there's nothing in the world more nutritious, nor cheaper and more easily digestible into the bargain.

A PARTICULARLY STOUT PARTY : *Monsieur*, be so good as to pass me those potatoes in front of you. At the rate they're disappearing I am afraid of being too late.

MYSELF : *Monsieur*, they are within your reach, surely.

PARTICULARLY STOUT PARTY : But aren't you going to help

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yourself? There are enough for both of us, and after us the deluge.

MYSELF : Not for me, I thank you ; to my mind the only value of potatoes is as a last resort in case of starvation ; apart from that, I know of nothing more completely insipid.

PARTICULARLY STOUT PARTY : O gastronomical heresy ! There's nothing better in the world than potatoes ; I eat them in every conceivable form, and if any appear in the second course, whether *à la Lyonnaise* or *soufflés*, I here and now declare for the preservation of my rights.

STOUT LADY : You would be kindness itself if you would get them to pass along those *Soissons* haricot beans I see at the end of the table.

MYSELF (*having complied with her request, and singing softly, to a well-known air*) :

Happy the folk of *Soissons* ! Lo !
Beans at their very threshold grow.

STOUT LADY : Do not jest ; they are a real source of wealth for the district. *Paris* pays large sums of money for them. And give me leave also to praise those little beans called English ; when they are young and fresh, they are food for the gods.

MYSELF : Anathema on beans, both haricot and English !

STOUT LADY : That for your anathema ! Do you set up to be a whole council in yourself ?

MYSELF (*to another stout lady*) : Allow me to congratulate you on your excellent health, *madame* ; it seems to me you have grown somewhat fatter since last I had the honour of seeing you.

STOUT LADY : It is doubtless owing to my new diet.

MYSELF : How so ?

STOUT LADY : For some time now I have taken to lunching off a very rich soup, a bowl of it large enough for two ; and what soup ! The spoon would stand upright in it.

MYSELF (*to another*) : *Madame*, if your eyes do not deceive me, you will accept a little of this charlotte ? Pray, let me attack it for you.

STOUT LADY : Well, *monsieur*, my eyes do deceive you ; there are but two things here I specially covet, and they are both of the masculine gender : one is that rice-cake, brushed over with yolk of egg, and the other that gigantic sponge-cake ; for you must know that I adore all sweet cakes.

MYSELF (*to another*) : While they talk politics down there,

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madame, may I put this frangipani tart to the question for you ?

STOUT LADY : Pray, do : nothing agrees with me so well as pastry. We have a pastry-cook tenant at home, and I verily believe my daughter and myself between us absorb the whole of the rent he pays us, and more besides.

MYSELF (*after glancing at the young person*) : The diet evidently suits you to perfection : your daughter is a most charming person, and irresistibly pretty.

STOUT LADY : Yet, would you believe it, her girl friends sometimes tell her she is too fat.

MYSELF : Perhaps it is only envy. . . .

STOUT LADY : It very likely may be. But however, I am marrying her soon, and the first baby will put everything to rights.

By such conversations as these I put a theory to the test, which I had primarily evolved apart from mankind, namely, that the chief cause of corpulence is a diet too exclusively made up of starchy and farinaceous elements ; and in this way I satisfied myself that the same diet is always followed by the same result.

Carnivorous animals never grow fat (consider wolves, jackals, birds of prey, crows, etc.).

Herbivorous animals do not easily grow fat, unless age has reduced them to a state of inactivity ; but they fatten very rapidly as soon as they begin to be fed on potatoes, grain, or any kind of flour.

Obesity is never found either among savages, or in those classes of society in which men work to eat, and only eat to live.

100. FROM the observations above noted, the accuracy of which anyone can verify, it is easy to assign the principal causes of obesity. Causes of Obesity

The first is in the natural constitution of the individual. Nearly all men are born with certain predispositions, of which their physiognomy bears the stamp. Out of a hundred persons who die of consumption, ninety have brown hair, long faces, and pointed noses.

It is certain that there are persons virtually foredoomed to corpulence, persons whose digestive activities, other things being equal, create more fat than those of the generality of men.

This physical truth, of which I am firmly convinced, some-

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times influences my way of looking at things in a most distressing manner.

When there appears in society a pretty, vivacious, rosy-cheeked young person, whose nose is roguish, her contours rounded, and her hands and feet plump for all their smallness, everybody is entranced and finds her charming ; everyone, that is, but I, who, taught by experience, gaze on her with the eyes of twelve years hence, see the ravages which obesity will have wrought on those fresh young charms, and groan inwardly over ills not yet existent. A painful feeling is this anticipant compassion, and furnishes one proof, among a thousand others, that man would be more miserable than he is, if he could foresee the future.

The second of the chief causes of obesity is in the floury and feculent substances which man makes the prime ingredients of his daily nourishment. As we have said already, all animals that live on farinaceous food grow fat whether they will or no ; and man is no exception to the universal law.

Fecula produces its effect sooner and more surely in conjunction with sugar ; sugar and fat both contain hydrogen as a common element ; both are inflammable. And with this addition, it is the more active in that it pleases the palate more, and because sweet dishes are seldom eaten until after the natural appetite is satisfied, when only that pampered appetite remains which must be coaxed by the last refinement of art and the subtlest variety.

Fecula is no less incrassative when conveyed in drinks, such as beer and others of the same kind. The beer-drinking countries are those where the most marvellous paunches are found ; and certain Parisian families which, in 1817, drank beer for reasons of economy, were repaid by an increase of bulk which at last they scarcely knew what to do with.

Causes of
Obesity
continued

101. A DOUBLE cause of obesity arises from excess of sleep and want of exercise.

The human body gains much during sleep, and suffers little loss in the same period, since muscular activity is suspended. It thus becomes essential that the surplus acquired should be reduced by exercise ; yet in direct proportion to the time spent in sleep, the time for action is reduced.

By another necessary consequence, long sleepers shun everything that promises to be in the smallest degree exhausting ;
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the excess products of assimilation are therefore swept into the stream of circulation ; they are there charged, by a process of which nature alone holds the secret, with an additional percentage of hydrogen, and fat soon forms, to be deposited by the same agency in the capsules of the cellular tissue.

102. A LAST cause of obesity consists in excess of food and drink. We have had occasion to say that it is one of the privileges of mankind to eat without being hungry and drink without being thirsty ; a privilege clearly not shared by the beasts, for it is born of reflection upon the pleasures of the table, and the wish to prolong them. The same continued

This twofold inclination exists wherever men exist ; and it is well known that savages drink themselves silly, whenever an opportunity presents itself.

As for ourselves, the citizens of the two worlds, who believe that we are at the acme of civilisation, it is certain that we overeat.

I am not speaking of the few who, governed by avarice or impotence, live alone and apart ; the former gloating over the gold so saved, the latter lamenting their inability to do better ; I am speaking, and in the firm conviction that I speak the truth, of all who, moving about us and in our midst, are by turns amphitryons or guests, and politely offer or complaisantly accept ; who when all their needs are satisfied, eat of a dish because it is attractive, or drink of a wine because it is new to them ; of such I am speaking, whether they sit daily in fine dining-rooms, or only celebrate on Sundays, and occasionally Mondays also ; in each vast majority, all eat and drink too much, and huge quantities of food are daily absorbed without necessity.

This cause, though ever present, acts differently according to the constitution of the individual ; and in the case of those who have bad stomachs, its effect is not obesity, but indigestion.

103. WE have witnessed with our own eyes an instance which *half Paris* had the opportunity of observing. Anecdote

M. Lang had one of the most brilliant houses in that town ; his table especially was excellent, but his stomach was as bad as his gourmandism was extreme. He did the honours perfectly, and himself ate with a courage worthy of a better fate.

All would go well until after the coffee, when very soon his stomach would refuse to do its duty, pains began, and the

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wretched gastronome was forced to throw himself down on a couch, and remain there till next day, expiating the brief pleasures of taste in prolonged agony.

The remarkable point is that he never saw fit to change his ways ; as long as he lived, he freely underwent this strange alternative, and never allowed the sufferings of the night to interfere with next day's dinner.

In the case of those whose stomach is in good order, excess of nourishment acts as described in the foregoing chapter. Everything is digested, and what is not needed for the body's recuperation, solidifies and turns into fat.

With the others, chronic indigestion is the rule ; their food passes through them without benefit, and those who are unaware of the reason are surprised when so many good things do not produce better results.

It must be understood that I am not dealing exhaustively with the subject ; for there are a thousand secondary causes arising out of our habits, occupations, enthusiasms, and loves, which aid and abet those already mentioned.

All which I bequeath to the successor whom I planted at the beginning of this chapter, being content myself with that prelibation which belongs by right to all first comers.

It is long since intemperance first claimed the attention of observers. Philosophers have exalted temperance, princes have made sumptuary laws, religion has moralised over gourmandism ; alas ! not a mouthful the less has been eaten in consequence, and the art of overeating flourishes daily more and more.

Perhaps I shall meet with better fortune if I follow a new course ; I intend to expose the *physical discomforts of obesity* ; and self-preservation will perhaps be a stronger force than morals, more persuasive than sermons, and mightier than laws ; and the fair sex at least, I believe, is more than ready to open its eyes to the light.

Inconveni-
ences of
Obesity

104. OBESITY wields a distressing influence over both the sexes, since it undermines both strength and beauty.

It undermines strength, because, while increasing the weight of the mass to be moved, it does not increase the motive power ; it is also dangerous in that it obstructs breathing, and so makes any work impossible which demands the prolonged use of muscular energy.

Obesity injures beauty, by destroying the originally estab-

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lished harmony of proportion ; for all parts of the body do not fatten equally.

It further injures it by filling up the hollows which are nature's shading ; it is all too common to see faces, once eminently attractive, made almost plain by obesity.

The head of the late government was not immune from this law. He grew extremely fat in the course of his last campaigns ; his complexion turned from pale to ashen, and his eyes lost much of their proud lustre.

Obesity entails distaste for dancing, walking, and riding, and unfitness for every occupation or amusement requiring the least agility or address.

It also prevents the way for various diseases, such as apoplexy, dropsy, and ulcers of the legs, and makes all ailments whatsoever more difficult to cure.

105. OF heroes who were corpulent, I can recall none besides *Marius* and *John Sobieski*. Examples
of Obesity

Marius, who was a short man, grew as round as he was long, and it may well have been his very enormity that terrified the *Cimbrian* charged with the duty of slaying him.

As for the King of *Poland*, his obesity came near being the end of him ; for, being forced to flee from before a large body of Turkish horsemen, his breath failed him, and he would certainly have been done to death, had not some of his aides-de-camp supported him, half-unconscious, in his saddle, while others generously sacrificed their lives to check the advancing enemy.

If I am not mistaken, the *Duc de Vendôme*, that worthy son of the great *Henry*, was also of more than ordinary corpulence. He died in a tavern, forsaken by all the world, and retained enough consciousness to see the last of his people snatch the cushion from beneath his head, at the moment of his uttering his last sigh.

There are many other instances of monstrous obesity on record ; I shall pass them by, to speak in a few words of those I have observed with my own eyes.

M. Rameau, my schoolfellow as a boy and later Mayor of *La Chaleur*, in *Burgundy*, was five feet two inches tall, and weighed five hundred pounds.

M. le Duc de Luynes, by whose side I have often sat at table, became enormous ; fat entirely ruined his erstwhile elegant

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figure, and he passed the latter years of his life in a state of almost permanent somnolence.

But the most extraordinary example of the kind I ever saw was a native of *New York*, whom many *Frenchmen* now living in *Paris* must often have seen in the street called *Broadway*, sitting in an armchair the legs of which would have supported a church.

Edward was at least five feet ten inches tall, French measure, and fat having blown him out in all directions, he must have been at least eight feet round. His fingers were like those of the Roman Emperor who used his wife's necklaces as rings; his arms and thighs were tubular, of the thickness of an ordinary man's body, and he had feet like an elephant's, half hidden beneath the fatty overflow of his legs; the weight of fat had drawn his lower eyelids down, giving him a perpetual stare; but what above all made him hideous to behold was three spheroidal chins, which hung down more than a foot's length upon his chest, so that his face looked like the capital of a wreathed column.

In this state *Edward* passed his days, sitting at the window of a ground-floor room which gave on to the street, and now and again drinking a glass of ale, a mighty pitcher of which was always by his side.

So extraordinary a face could not fail to bring passers-by to a halt; but they were not allowed to stay long, for *Edward* soon put them to flight, exclaiming in sepulchral tones, 'What have you to stare at, like so many wild cats? . . . Go your way, you lazy body. . . . Be gone, you good for nothing dogs! (*sic*),' and other such mild protests.

I used often to greet him by name, and sometimes had a word with him; he assured me he was neither bored nor in the least unhappy, and that if death never came to disturb him, he would gladly so await the end of the world.

From what has been said in this chapter it will be clear that if obesity is not a disease, it is at least a troublesome indisposition, into which we nearly always sink through our own fault.

It is equally plain that all must wish to avoid it if they are not already overtaken, and to be rid of it if they are; and for their benefit we are going to examine the resources made available by science with the help of observation.



XXII. Prevention and Cure of Obesity¹

106. I WILL begin with a story which proves that courage is required for the prevention no less than for the cure of obesity.

M. Louis Greffulhe, whom His Majesty later honoured with the title of Count, came to see me one morning, and told me that, having heard of my practical interest in the question of obesity, and being himself gravely menaced with it, he was come to ask my advice.

'*Monsieur*,' said I, 'not being a qualified doctor of medicine, I should be within my rights in refusing your request; however, I am at your service, on one condition, namely, that you give me your word of honour that you will follow for one month, and with strict fidelity, the rule of conduct I shall prescribe for you.'

M. Greffulhe gave the requisite assurance, and shook hands

¹ Twenty years ago I undertook to write an *ex professo* treatise on obesity. My readers will especially regret the preface, which was cast in dramatic form, and in which I proved to a doctor that fever is far less dangerous than a lawsuit, because the latter, after forcing the plaintiff to make haste, delay, lie, and curse, and robbing him of sleep, happiness, and money for an indefinite period, in the end causes him to fall ill and die of vexation: a truth as well deserving of propagation as any other.

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on it ; and next day I delivered my fetwa, the first article of which enjoined him to weigh himself before and after the course of treatment, so as to procure a mathematical basis on which to ascertain its efficacy.

At the end of the month, *M. Greffulhe* came to see me again, and spoke to the following effect :

‘*Monsieur*, I have followed your prescription as if my life depended on it ; and I find that within the month my weight has decreased by three pounds, and even a little more. But in order to obtain this result, I have been forced to do such violence to all my tastes and to all my habits, in a word, I have gone through so much suffering, that while sincerely thanking you for your excellent advice, I hereby renounce whatever good might come of it, and abandon myself, for the future, to that which Providence may ordain.’

After such a declaration, which I heard with sorrow, the end was only what it was bound to be ; *M. Greffulhe* grew more and more corpulent, suffered all the discomforts of extreme obesity, and, at little more than forty years of age, died from the effects of a suffocating malady to which he had become subject.

Generalities 107. EVERY cure of obesity should begin with these three precepts, which are unquestionably sound in theory : discretion in eating, moderation in sleeping, and exercise on foot or on horseback.

They are the first and best resources available ; but I scarcely count on them, because I know men and things, and that no prescription which is not complied with to the letter can be effectual.

Now, in the first place, it requires great strength of mind to leave the table with an appetite ; so long as the need remains, one mouthful attracts another with irresistible force ; and in general a man will go on eating as long as he is hungry, in spite of the doctors, and even following their example.

Secondly, to propose to a fat man that he shall get up early, is to pierce him to the heart ; he will tell you that his constitution would never stand it, and that when he has risen early, he is good for nothing during the rest of the day ; a woman will complain that it makes her haggard ; they will all consent to sit up late, but insist on sleeping through the best part of the morning ; and there's another resource made unavailable.

XXII. *Prevention and Cure of Obesity*

Thirdly, riding is an expensive remedy, and suits neither all purses nor all positions.

Propose riding to a pretty woman who is also fat, and she will joyfully agree, on three conditions : first, that she shall be furnished with a handsome, lively, and sweet-tempered horse ; second, that she shall have a new riding-habit of the very latest cut ; and third, that she shall be attended by a squire both gallant and complaisant. These are rarely to be had all at once, and so farewell to equitation.

Exercise on foot calls forth many other objections : it is wearisome to death, and causes perspiration and the risk of catching cold ; dust ruins the stockings, and stones work through little shoes, until to go on becomes impossible. And if the shadow of a headache follows, or a spot the size of a pin's head breaks through the skin, the régime is at once blamed and incontinently abandoned, while the doctor raves like a madman.

And so, it being agreed that whoever wishes to see his bulk diminish, should eat with moderation, sleep little, and take as much exercise as he can, it still remains to seek another way of attaining the same end. Now, there is an infallible method of preventing corpulence from becoming excessive, or of reducing it when it has reached that stage. This method, which is based on the surest precepts of chemistry and physics, consists in a regular diet appropriate to the desired effect.

Of all medical prescriptions, diet is the best, because it acts incessantly by day and night, in sleep and in waking ; its effect is reinforced with every meal, and it ends by subjugating every part of the individual's body. Now, an anti-obesical diet must necessarily be governed by the most active cause of obesity ; and since it has been proved that fatty congestion is simply due to flour and fecula, in man as well as in animals (for, in the case of the latter, this very effect is deliberately produced every day beneath our eyes, and creates the trade in fattened animals), it may be inferred, as an invariable consequence, that a more or less strict abstinence from all floury or fecular food is conducive to the reduction of flesh.

' Good heavens ! ' (my readers of both sexes here exclaim), ' good heavens, only listen to this barbarous Professor ! Here he is in one word proscribing everything we love—*Limet's* white bread, *Achard's* biscuits, ——'s cakes, and all the good things made of flour and butter, flour and sugar, flour, sugar, and eggs !

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He doesn't even leave us potatoes or macaroni ! Who would have expected this of an amateur who seemed so good-natured ?'

'What is this I hear ?' I reply, pulling my severe face, which I only use once a year ; 'very well, then ; eat and grow fat ; grow ugly, heavy, and asthmatic, and die of melted grease ; I shall be there to take notes, and you will appear in my second edition. . . . What ? A single phrase has vanquished you ? You are terrified, and beg me to withhold the bolt. . . . Calm yourselves ; I am going to describe your régime, and you will find that some pleasure still remains for you, in this world wherein we live to eat.

'You like bread : very well, you will eat rye bread ; the worthy *Cadet de Vaux* long since preconised its virtues ; it is less nutritious and less agreeable also ; the which but makes our precept easier to obey. For to be sure of yourselves, you must ever flee temptation. Bear that well in mind ; 'tis a choice piece of morality.

'You like soup : let it be clear, *à la julienne*, with green vegetables, cabbage, roots, but innocent of bread and floury pastes ; and all thick soups are forbidden.

'For the first course you are free of everything, with a few exceptions, such as chicken and rice, for example, and the crust of hot pies. Work, but be circumspect, so that you have not to satisfy, at a later stage, a need which will exist no longer.

'The second course is due to appear, and you will require all your philosophy. Flee all things floury, in whatever guise they come ; have you not still the roast, and the salad, and the green vegetables ? And if you must needs have sweets, eat preferably chocolate crème, or orange, punch, and other similar jellies.

'Here comes dessert. A new source of danger ; but if you have borne yourselves with due propriety thus far, your wisdom will increase from strength to strength. Mistrust the ends of the table (for there the gingerbread is ever gilt) ; avert your eyes from biscuits, and from macaroons ; there still remain all kinds of fruit, jams, and much else which you will learn to choose for yourself, if you adopt my principles.

'After dinner, I insist on coffee, permit liqueurs, and advise tea and punch upon occasion.

'For breakfast, the appointed rye bread, and chocolate rather than coffee. But I do not forbid coffee with a little milk only ; no eggs, and the rest as you please. But you cannot breakfast

XXII. *Prevention and Cure of Obesity*

too early. When you breakfast late, dinner is upon you before digestion is complete ; yet you eat no less ; and such eating without appetite is a most active cause of obesity, because of its frequent recurrence.

108. HITHERTO, I have but traced for you, like a kind and thoughtful father, the limits of a diet which wards off the obesity that threatens to attack you ; let us now add a few precepts directed against that which has already taken hold of you. Diet continued

Drink, every summer, thirty bottles of Seltzer water, a very large glass when you wake up, two immediately before luncheon, and as many more when you go to bed. Prefer, for the most part, white, light, and acid wines, like those of *Anjou*. Shun beer like the plague, ask often for radishes, fresh artichokes, asparagus, celery, and cardoons. Of meat, prefer veal and fowl ; of bread, eat nothing but the crust ; in doubtful cases be guided by a doctor who adopts my principles ; and at whatever moment you begin to follow them, you will very soon be fresh, pretty, brisk, well, and fit for anything.

Having thus set you on the road, I must also open your eyes to the pitfalls, for fear lest, carried away by obesifugal zeal, you go beyond the mark.

The snare I wish to draw attention to, is the habitual use of acids, which ignorant persons sometimes advise, and which have been proved by experience to be invariably pernicious.

109. THERE circulates among women a fatal doctrine, which every year brings many a young person to the grave, to wit, that acids, and particularly vinegar, are preventives against obesity. Danger of Acids

No doubt continued use of acids is thinning, but only at the cost of freshness, health, and life ; and though lemonade is the mildest of them all, few stomachs can for long absorb even it with impunity.

The truth I have enunciated above cannot be too widely known ; there are few of my readers who could not furnish me, out of their own experience, with an observation to bear me out, but of them all I prefer the following, which is in some sort personal to myself.

In 1776 I was at *Dijon*, taking a course of instruction to qualify me for the Faculty : a chemistry course under *M. Guyton de Morveau*, then attorney general, and a course of domestic

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medicine under *M. Maret*, permanent secretary of the Academy, and the father of *M. le Duc de Bassano*.

I there formed a sympathetic friendship with one of the loveliest girls I ever remember to have seen. I say *sympathetic friendship*, and this is both strictly true and at the same time not a little remarkable, for I was in those days admirably furnished for affinities of a far more exacting nature.

This friendship, then, which must be accepted for what it was, and not for what it might have been, had ripened, from our very first meeting, into a close familiarity which to us seemed perfectly natural, and was expressed in endless whispered confidences which alarmed her mother not at all, because they were of an innocence worthy of the golden age.

Louise was very pretty, and possessed, in a just proportion, that classic fullness of figure which delights all eyes and is the glory of the imitative arts. And although I was no more than her friend, I was far from being blind to the charms she displayed or allowed to be surmised ; it may well be, indeed, that without my being aware of it, they strengthened the chaste sentiment which drew me towards her. Be that as it may, one evening, looking closely at *Louise*, 'Dear friend,' I said, 'you are unwell ; you seem to have grown thinner.' 'Oh no,' she answered, smiling (but her smile seemed somehow tinged with melancholy), 'I am quite well ; and if I am thinner, why, I can afford to lose a little in that direction without being beggared.' 'To lose !' replied I, hotly ; 'you are in need of neither loss nor gain ; stay as you are, altogether lovely,' and more to the same effect, with the fluency that is natural in an admirer of twenty years old.

But after this conversation, I began to watch my dear friend anxiously, and soon my fears were realised ; I saw her colour fading, her cheeks growing hollow, her charms withering away. . . . Ah ! what a frail and fleeting thing is beauty ! At length, being her partner at a ball (for she still danced as usual), I persuaded her to sit out two quadrilles ; while we sat alone, I insisted on learning the truth, and she confessed that, tired of the jests of some of her girl friends, who assured her that in less than two years she would be fatter than *Saint Christopher*, and by the advice of other friends, she had sought means of thinning herself, and to that end had been drinking a glass of vinegar every morning for a month : she further added that until that moment she had taken no one into her confidence.

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I shuddered when I heard her confession, for I knew the extent of the danger ; and next morning I told everything to *Louise's* mother, who was no less alarmed than I, for she adored her daughter. No time was lost ; doctors were summoned, they examined her, and gave her medicine. Vain efforts ! The sources of life were irremediably assailed ; at the moment when the danger was first suspected, there was already no more hope. And so, through listening to unwise counsels, dear *Louise*, reduced to the dreadful state that accompanies consumption, fell asleep for ever, when she was scarcely eighteen years old.

She died gazing sadly into a future that for her would never be ; and the thought of having, albeit involuntarily, taken her own life, both hastened her end and made it the more bitter.

She was the first fellow-creature I ever saw die, for she breathed her last in my arms, while I was raising her, at her own desire, to see the day. Eight hours after her death, her poor mother begged me to accompany her on a last visit to what remained of her daughter ; when we found, to our surprise, that her face had lost its sadness, and now seemed radiantly happy. I was amazed at the change ; her mother took it for an omen, and was much consoled. But the case is a not uncommon one. *Lavater* mentions it in his Treatise on the Physiognomy.

110. EVERY anti-obesical diet should include a precautionary measure which I had forgotten, but ought to have begun with ; this consists in the wearing, by day and night, of a moderately tight belt to hold in the stomach. Anti-obesical
Belt

In order to appreciate the necessity of this measure, it should be borne in mind that the vertebral column, which forms one of the walls of the intestinal case, is firm and inflexible ; whence it follows that all the excess weight acquired by the intestines, as soon as the fat causes it to deviate from the vertical, bears against the several enveloping skins of the belly ; and these, though capable of distending to an almost indefinite degree,¹ would not have sufficient resilience to contract again, when relieved from the pressure of the fat, unless they received mechanical aid in the form of the belt, which, obtaining purchase round the dorsal column, becomes its direct antagonist, and so restores equilibrium. It thus has the double effect of preventing the belly from yielding outwards to the actual weight of the intes-

¹ *Mirabeau* said of an excessively fat man, that God had only created him to show how far the human skin would stretch without bursting.

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tines, and giving it the necessary strength to contract again when that weight decreases. It should never be left off, or the good done during the day will be undone in the freedom of the night ; but it causes little discomfort, and the wearer quickly grows accustomed to it.

The patient is not condemned to wear such a belt for life : it may be relinquished without harm when the required point of reduction has been reached and maintained for a few weeks : though, naturally, a suitable diet must still be observed. It is at least six years since I left my own belt off.

Quinine

III. THERE exists a substance which I believe to be actively anti-obesical ; several observations have brought me to this belief ; but I shall not quarrel with doubters, and I invite doctors to experiment.

That substance is quinine.

Ten or twelve persons of my acquaintance used to suffer from intermittent fevers ; they cured themselves, some with homely remedies, powders, etc., the others by continued use of quinine, which never failed of its effect.

All the individuals in the first category who were obese, returned to their former corpulence ; all in the second remained permanently rid of their superfluous flesh ; and this surely justifies me in the belief that it was the quinine which produced that effect, for there was no difference between the parties concerned except the method of their cure.

Rational theory is not opposed to this inference ; for on the one hand quinine, stimulating all the vital pores, may well cause a state of activity in the circulation, whereby the gases which would otherwise turn into fat are dissipated ; and on the other, it is known that quinine contains a proportion of tannin, which may close up the cells which would ordinarily receive fatty congestions. It is likely enough that the two effects co-operate.

In virtue of these properties, the existence of which whoever so wishes may verify for himself, I believe I may recommend quinine to all who desire to rid themselves of excessive fat. And so, *dummodo annuerint in omni medicationis genere doctissimi Facultatis professores*, I think that after one month on an appropriate diet, he or she who would grow slender will do well to take, during the next month, every other day, at seven in the morning, or two hours before breakfast, a teaspoonful of

XXII. Prevention and Cure of Obesity

good red quinine in a glass of dry white wine, and that good results will follow.

Such are the means which I recommend to combat an inconvenience as troublesome as it is common. I have adjusted them to agree with human weaknesses, the outcome of the state of society in which we live. I have gone on the principle that the stricter the régime, the less sure are its effects, because it will be obeyed either half-heartedly or not at all. Great results are rare ; and to be listened to, it is wise only to propose that to men which comes easily to them, and even, when possible, that which pleases them.



XXIII. On Thinness

Definition 112. THINNESS is the condition of the individual whose muscular flesh, not being filled out with fat, reveals the form and angles of the bony structure.

Different Kinds THERE are two forms of thinness: the first is that which, resulting from the natural constitution of the body, is accompanied by health and complete exercise of all the organic functions; the second is that which, being caused by the weakness of certain organs, or the defective action of others, gives to the individual afflicted a wretched and puny appearance. I have known a young woman of middle height to weigh only sixty-five pounds.

Effect of Thinness 113. THINNESS is no great disadvantage to men; they are no weaker for being thin, and as a rule much more active. The father of the young lady mentioned above, though quite as thin as his daughter, was strong enough to lift a heavy chair with his teeth and throw it backwards over his head.

XXIII. *On Thinness*

But for women it is a terrible misfortune ; to them beauty is more than life itself, and beauty chiefly consists in roundness of form and gracefully curving lines. The most painstaking toilette, the sublimest of costumes, cannot hide certain absences, nor disguise certain angles ; and it is a common saying, that with every pin she removes, a thin woman, however beautiful she may seem, loses something of her charm.

For the constitutionally emaciated, there is no remedy ; or rather, the Faculty must be called in, and the treatment may be so long drawn out that the cure will be almost too late. But women who are born thin, yet whose stomach is in order, are no more difficult to fatten than chickens ; and if it takes a little longer, that is because their stomachs are comparatively smaller and because they cannot be subjected, like those devoted birds, to a strict and meticulously executed régime.

The above comparison is the gentlest I could find ; I had to have one, and the ladies will, I hope, forgive me on the score of the good intentions with which this chapter is written.

114. NATURE, ever various in her works, has moulds for thin- Natural Pre-
ness, even as for obesity. disposition

Women destined to be thin are constructed on an elongated system. Their hands and feet are slender, their legs lank, the region of the coccyx scantily covered, their ribs apparent, their noses aquiline, their eyes almond-shaped, their mouths large, their chins pointed, and their hair dark brown.

Such is the general type ; some parts of the body may not conform, but this is rarely the case.

You may sometimes see thin persons with large appetites. All those whom I have been able to interrogate have confessed that they digested badly, that they . . . and there you have the reason why they stay thin.

Emaciated men vary infinitely as to hair and build. They are distinguished for having nothing salient, either in their features or their persons ; their eyes are dull, their lips colourless, the conformation of their features indicates lack of energy, weakness, something akin to suffering. It may almost be said of them that they seem unfinished, and that in them the torch of life has not been fully lighted.

115. EVERY thin woman wishes to put on flesh ; 'tis a longing Fattening
that has been confided to us a thousand times ; wherefore, as Régime

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a last tribute to the all-powerful sex, we shall inquire how to replace by solid shapes those artificial charms, of silk or cotton, which may be seen lavishly displayed in the fashion-shops, to the great scandal of the severe, who pass by horrified and avert their eyes from mere chimeras with as much and more nicety than if the reality obtruded upon their gaze.

The whole secret of acquiring plumpness lies in a suitable diet; all that is needed is to eat with due discrimination. Given a proper diet, definite instructions as to rest and sleep are scarcely necessary. For if you take no exercise, the lack of it disposes you to put on flesh; and if you take exercise, you will still put on flesh, for you will eat more in consequence of it; and when appetite is suitably satisfied, the eater is not only refreshed, but in addition acquires where there is need of acquiring.

If you sleep long, sleep is fattening; if you sleep little, your digestion will the sooner be completed, and you will eat more.

Thus it is only a question of indicating in what forms of nourishment those should indulge who wish to round off their angles; and this task can present no difficulties, after the various principles we have already laid down.

To solve the problem, we must offer to the stomach food which will occupy it without subjecting it to a heavy strain, and to the assimilative powers material which they can turn into fat.

Let us endeavour to prescribe the alimentary day of a sylph, or male or female, whose wish it is to materialise.

General Rule.—Eat plenty of new bread, of the day's baking, being careful to lay aside the crust.

Before eight o'clock in the morning, and in bed if necessary, drink a bowl of soup thickened with bread or dough, not too copious, in order that it may pass rapidly through the system; or, if preferred, a cup of good chocolate.

At eleven o'clock will come breakfast, consisting of fresh eggs broiled or fried, patties, cutlets, or whatever else may be desired; the essential thing is that there shall be eggs. A cup of coffee will do no harm.

The dinner-hour will be regulated in such a way that breakfast will have been completely digested first; for we are accustomed to say that whenever the ingestion of a meal infringes on the digestion of the one before, there is malversation.

After breakfast, a little exercise; in the case of men, only if the state which they have embraced allows of it, for duty before

XXIII. On Thinness

everything ; the ladies will walk in the *Bois de Boulogne*, or the *Tuileries*, visit their dressmaker, their milliner, and the various fashion-shops, and call on their friends to talk of what they have seen. We hold it for a certainty that such talk is eminently medicamental, through the great contentment that accompanies it.

For dinner, soup, meat, and fish as desired ; but let it also include such accessories as macaroni, rice-dishes, sweet creams and pastry, charlottes, etc.

For dessert, Savoy biscuits, babas, and other preparations made of flour, eggs, and sugar.

The above diet, though apparently circumscriptive, is in fact susceptible of great variety ; it admits the whole animal kingdom ; and great care must be taken to alter the kind, cooking, and seasoning of the various flour-dishes consumed, and to make them as appetising as possible, in order to prevent disgust, which would offer an insurmountable obstacle to all ulterior amelioration.

Beer should be drunk for preference ; otherwise the wines of *Bordeaux* or the *South of France*.

Shun all acids, except salad, which rejoices the heart. Take sugar with those fruits which permit of it ; let your bath be not too cold ; seize all possible opportunities of breathing the pure country air ; eat plenty of grapes when they are in season ; and do not wear yourself out with too much dancing.

Go to bed at eleven o'clock on ordinary days, and not later than one o'clock in the morning on special occasions.

By following this régime strictly and courageously, you will soon have improved on nature's shortcomings ; health will gain as much as beauty ; pleasure will result from one and the other, and grateful accents will echo pleasantly in the Professor's ear.

We fatten sheep, calves, oxen, fowls, carp, crayfish, and oysters ; whence I deduce the following general maxim : *Everything that eats can be fattened, provided the food be well and suitably selected.*



XXIV. On Fasting

Definition 116. FASTING is a voluntary abstinence from food, with a moral or religious end in view.

Although fasting is in direct opposition to one of our natural inclinations, or rather of our most habitual needs, it is nevertheless a custom of the highest antiquity.

Origin of
Fasting

Its institution is explained as follows by authorities on the subject. In cases of private bereavement (they say), for example on the death of a father, mother, or much-loved child, the whole household went into mourning ; to lamentations succeeded the washing and embalming of the corpse, and thereafter funeral rites were performed on a scale conformable to the rank of the departed. In such circumstances, there was little thought of eating ; and so the mourners fasted without knowing that they did so.

Not otherwise, in cases of public affliction, for example in time of drought or excessive rainfall, pestilence, or cruel wars, in a word, under any scourge beyond redress by force or industry,

XXIV. On Fasting

the whole community gave way to tears, and attributed their woes to the wrath of the gods ; they humbled themselves before them, and offered up the mortification of abstinence. The bad times ended ; and persuading themselves that this must needs be due to their tears and fasting, they continued to have recourse to the same in similar conjunctures.

Thus, men afflicted either with public or private calamities gave way to lamentations, and neglected food ; and soon came to look upon such voluntary abstinence as an act of religion.

They believed that by macerating the body when the soul was afflicted, they could stir the gods to pity ; and the same notion seizing on the minds of all peoples, gave rise to mourning, vows, prayers, sacrifices, mortification, and abstinence.

And finally, Jesus Christ being come among men, sanctified fasting, and every Christian sect has adopted it, with more or less of mortification.

117. THE practice of fasting, I am bound to remark, has fallen sadly into abeyance ; and whether for the edification of the ungodly, or their conversion, I shall proceed to relate how we went about it in the middle of the eighteenth century.

At ordinary times we breakfasted before nine o'clock, on bread, cheese, fruit, and sometimes pie or cold meat.

Between midday and one o'clock we dined, off the proceeds of the household stock-pot, more or less reinforced according to fortune and circumstance.

About four o'clock, children, and those of their elders who prided themselves on adhering to the customs of past times, indulged in a light meal or snack.

But there were also, be it said, *suppatory* snacks, which began at five o'clock and lasted indefinitely ; these meals were usually very gay, and agreed marvellously with the ladies, who even gave them among themselves, to the exclusion of all males. And I find it written in my secret Memoirs that they were the occasion of much scandal and naughty talk.

At eight o'clock came supper, consisting of entrée, roast, side-dishes, salad, and dessert ; which was followed by a game at cards, and so to bed.

There were always, however, in *Paris*, other suppers of a more exalted order, which began after the play. These were affected, according to circumstances, by fashionable actresses, the elegant impure, noblemen, financiers, rakes, and wits.

Fasting
Described

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The latest song would be sung, and the newest story told ; politics, literature, and the play were the themes of conversation, and over all love presided.

Let us now see how matters proceeded on fast days.

In the first place, there would be no breakfast ; and appetite was thus more than ordinarily whetted.

Then, when the time came, you dined as best you might ; but fish and vegetables soon pass on their way, and before five you were ready to die of hunger ; you pulled out your watch, longed for the next meal, and raged in the midst of working out your own salvation.

At eight o'clock came, not a good dinner, but the collation, a word of cloistral origin, relating to the monkish custom of assembling at the day's end to read and discuss the Early Fathers ; after which they were allowed a glass of wine.

At this collation, then, neither butter, eggs, nor anything that had had life might be served up. The faster was forced to be content with salad, jams, and fruit ; dishes, alas ! of very small value, if we consider the point his appetite had reached by then : but he was usually patient for love of heaven, and so went hungry to bed, to repeat the performance next day and daily throughout Lent.

As for those who indulged in the little suppers before mentioned, I am assured they fasted neither then nor at any other time.

The culinary masterpiece of those far-off days was a collation at once strictly apostolical and having all the appearance of a good supper. Science successfully solved this problem, by means of the toleration granted to fish *au bleu*, vegetable broths, and pastry made with oil.

A strict observance of Lent made possible a pleasure which is to us unknown, that of *un-Lenting* at breakfast on Easter Day.

If we look into it closely, we find that the prime elements of our pleasures are difficulty, privation, desire, and accomplishment. All these came together in the act of breaking abstinence, and I have seen two of my grand-uncles, both strong and level-headed men, half swoon with joy when they saw the first slice cut from a ham, or a pie disembowelled, on Easter Day. Now, degenerate race that we are, we could never stand such powerful sensations !

Origin of
Relaxation

118. I MYSELF have witnessed the relaxation ; it came about by imperceptible degrees.
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Children below a certain age were not expected to fast ; and women with child, or expecting to be so, were exempt by virtue of their condition ; they were allowed meat to eat, and full suppers, which sorely tempted the fasters.

The time came when people began to find that fasting was bad for the temper, and caused headaches and sleeplessness. Next, it was blamed for all the minor ills which befall a man in the springtime, such as vernal eruptions, dizziness, bleeding at the nose, and the various symptoms of effervescence which denote the renewal of nature. And so one did not fast because he believed himself ill, another because he had been so, a third because he was afraid of becoming so ; whence it came about that meatless diets and collations grew rarer day by day.

Nor was this all ; there came a succession of winters severe enough to cause fears of a vegetable famine ; and the ecclesiastical powers themselves officially abated the rigour of their laws, when their own stewards complained of increased expenses due to meatless meals ; and some said it was not God's will that health should be endangered, while men of little faith added that paradise was not to be attained by way of starvation.

The duty, however, continued to be recognised, and almost always permission was asked of the priests, who rarely failed to grant it, but always insisted on alms-giving as a substitute for fasting.

Then finally the Revolution came, filling all men's minds with cares, fears, and interests of another nature ; there was then neither time nor opportunity for listening to the priests, some of whom were hunted down as enemies of the State, the which by no means prevented them from treating the others as schismatics.

To this last cause, which happily is no more with us, there was added another not less influential. Our meal-times have completely altered ; we eat neither so often nor at the same hours as our forebears, and fasting, to become the rule again, would require a new reorganisation.

So true is this, that although I frequent only sage and decorous, I may even say moderately godly circles, I do not believe that in twenty-five years I have seen more than ten meatless meals and a single collation, *outside my own door*. Many people might be much embarrassed in such a position ; but I know that *St. Paul* foresaw it, and I take shelter beneath his protection.

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Moreover, it would be a great mistake to suppose that intemperance has gained by the new order of things.

The number of meals has diminished almost by half. Drunkenness has disappeared from our midst, or is only to be seen on certain days, in the lowest classes of society. No more orgies are held ; and to-day a crapulous man would be an object of loathing. More than a third of *Paris* is content, of a morning, with the lightest of meals ; and if some indulge in the sweets of a delicate and studied gourmandism, I hardly see how they are to be blamed, for we have seen elsewhere that everybody gains thereby, and no one loses.

Let us not leave this subject without observing the new direction taken by popular taste.

Every day, some thousands of men spend at the theatre or in the café the evening which forty years ago they would have spent in taverns.

Doubtless economy gains nothing by the new arrangement, but it is highly beneficial in a moral sense. Morals are softened at the theatre ; in the café newspapers provide instruction ; and we safely avoid the quarrels, diseases, and degradation which are the infallible consequence of too much time spent in taverns.



XXV. On Exhaustion

119. By exhaustion we mean a state of weakness, heaviness, and languor, brought about by antecedent circumstances, and impeding the exercise of the vital functions. If we except that caused by deprivation of food, we may count three distinct kinds :

Exhaustion caused by muscular fatigue, exhaustion caused by overtaxing the brain, and exhaustion caused by amorous excess.

A remedy common to the three kinds of exhaustion is immediate cessation from the acts responsible for the condition, which, if not actually a disease, is at least next door to one.

120. WHEN this indispensable preliminary step has been taken, Treatment gastronomy is at hand, ever ready and resourceful.

To the man worn out by protracted exercise of his muscular forces, it offers good soup, generous wines, cooked meat, and sleep :

To the sage who has allowed himself to be carried away by the charms of his subject, exercise in the open air to refresh

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his brain, baths to loosen his aching fibres, fowl, green vegetables, and rest :

Lastly, we shall learn from the following observation, what it can do for him who forgets that love's ardour has its limits, and pleasure its attendant risks.

Cure
worked by
the Professor

121. HEARING one day that one of my best friends (*M. Rubar*) was unwell, I went to see him, and sure enough found him crouched over the fire in his dressing-gown, in an attitude of extreme debility.

His appearance filled me with alarm ; his face was pale, and his eyes unnaturally bright, while his lip hung down, exposing the teeth in his lower jaw in a manner I can only call hideous.

I anxiously inquired the cause of this sudden change ; he hesitated ; I pressed him, and at length, after a further show of resistance : ' My friend,' he said, blushing, ' you know my wife's jealousy, and what I have had to suffer through it in the past. Well, these last few days she has been positively beside herself, and it was through wishing to prove to her that she has lost none of my affection, and that no atom of the conjugal tribute goes astray to her prejudice, that I reduced myself to the state in which you now see me.' ' Have you forgotten, then,' said I, ' both that you are forty-five years old, and that jealousy's an evil past curing ? Don't you know *furens quid femina possit* ?' And I spoke further to the same effect, in a strain more frank than delicate, for what he told me roused my wrath.

' And now let us see,' I went on : ' your pulse is faint, irregular, and slow ; what do you propose to do ?' ' The doctor has only just left,' he answered ; ' he thought I was suffering from nervous fever, and prescribed a succession of bleedings, for which purpose he is going to send me a surgeon.'

' A surgeon !' I cried ; ' take care, or you're a dead man ! Drive him off like a murderer, and tell him I have taken charge of you, body and soul. Does your doctor know the immediate cause of your trouble ?' ' Alas, no ; shame kept me from making a clean breast of it.' ' Very well then, you must send for him at once. I am going to mix you a draught suitable to your condition ; meanwhile, drink this.' And I gave him a strong dose of sugar-and-water, which he swallowed with the confidence of *Alexander* and the faith of the charcoal-burner.

Then I left him and ran home to mix, compound, and elaborate

XXV. *On Exhaustion*

a very special pick-me-up, which the reader will find among the *Varieties*,¹ together with the various methods I adopted to save time ; for in such cases a few hours' delay leaves room for irreparable accidents.

I soon returned, armed with my potion, and found him already improved ; the colour was coming back to his cheeks, and his eyes were less unnaturally bright ; but the dreadful deformity of the pendulous lip still remained.

The doctor was not long in reappearing ; I explained the steps I had taken, and the patient made full confession. At first the doctorial brow contracted in a frown ; but soon, looking at us both with a somewhat ironical air, 'You can hardly be surprised,' he said to my friend, 'if I failed to recognise a malady so little consistent with your years and position ; and it was surely too modest of you to conceal the cause, which could only reflect honour on you. I must also find fault with you for exposing me to a mistake which might have proved fatal to you. For the rest, my fellow-practitioner,' and here he made me a bow, which I returned with usury, 'has put you on the right road. Take his broth, or whatever he chooses to call it, and if the fever leaves you, as I make no doubt it will, breakfast to-morrow on a cup of chocolate, with the yolks of two fresh eggs beaten up in it.'

With these words he took his hat and stick, and departed, leaving us strongly inclined to make merry at his expense.

I soon administered a stiff dose of my elixir ; the patient drank it down greedily and asked for more ; but I insisted on a two hours' adjournment, and stayed to give him the second dose before leaving for the night.

Next day he was rid of the fever and almost himself again ; he breakfasted according to instructions, and was able to resume his ordinary occupations the day following ; but the rebellious lip did not rise again till after the third day.

Not long afterwards the affair transpired, and all the ladies were whispering the details into one another's ear.

Some of them admired my friend, almost all were sorry for him ; and the gastronome Professor was duly glorified.

¹ See Part II. No. X.



XXVI. On Death

Omnia mors poscit ; lex est, non pœna, perire.

122. THE Creator has imposed on man six grand and radical necessities, which are : birth, action, eating, sleeping, reproduction, and death.

Death is the absolute interruption of the sensual relations, and absolute exhaustion of the vital forces, abandoning the body to the laws of decomposition.

Each of these necessities is accompanied and softened by some sensation of pleasure, and death itself is not without charms when it is natural, that is to say, when the body has run its allotted course through the several phases of growth, maturity, old age, and decrepitude.

Had I not resolved to make this a very short chapter, I should call to my aid the doctors who have noted by what imperceptible degrees the living body turns into inert matter. I should quote kings, philosophers, and men of letters, who upon the threshold of eternity, far from being a prey to sorrow, had cheerful thoughts, and clothed them in the grace of poetry. I should recall the

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words of the dying *Fontenelle*, who being asked what he thought of, replied, 'Nothing but the hardship of living.' But I prefer simply to declare my own conviction, based not only on analogy, but also on certain observations which I believe to have been well and accurately made, the last of which was as follows :

I had a great-aunt, who lay dying at the age of ninety-three. Although she had for some time been confined to her bed, she was still in possession of all her faculties, and her condition was only perceived through her gradual loss of appetite and the failure of her voice.

She had always shown great affection towards myself, and I was at her bedside, ready to wait on her with all solicitude ; which, however, did not prevent me from closely observing her with that philosophic eye which I have ever brought to bear on my surroundings.

'Are you there, nephew ?' she said to me in scarcely articulate tones. 'Yes, aunt ; I am here to serve you, and I believe you would do well to drink a little good, old wine.' 'Give it me, my friend ; liquid always goes downwards.' I quickly poured out half a glass of my best wine, and gently raising her, held it to her lips. She swallowed it, and at once rallied ; then, turning on me her eyes, which had once been very beautiful, 'Many thanks,' she said, 'for this last service ; if ever you should reach my age, you will find that death becomes a simple need, no less than sleep.'

They were her last words ; and half an hour later, she had fallen asleep for ever.

Doctor Richerand has so truthfully and philosophically described the final degradation of the human frame, and the last moments of the individual, that my readers will be grateful to me for extracting the following passage from his work :

'The following is the order in which the intellectual faculties fail and decompose. Reason, the attribute of which man claims to be the sole possessor, is the first to abandon him. First of all, he loses the power of associating judgments, and shortly after, that of comparing, collecting, combining, and linking up several ideas, for the purpose of pronouncing on their relationship to one another. At this stage we say of the patient that he loses his reason, wanders, or is in delirium. This last ordinarily revolves around the ideas most familiar to the individual ; his ruling passion is easily recognisable from his utterances : thus, the miser speaks openly of his hidden hoard ;

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such another dies assailed by religious terrors ; sweet memories of home, you then return to the exile with all your charm and poignancy !

‘After reason and judgment, the faculty of associating ideas next yields to the forces of destruction. The same phenomenon occurs in the state known as *swooning*, as I have proved upon myself. For one day, when talking with a friend, I suddenly experienced an insurmountable difficulty in joining together two ideas, on the resemblance between which I desired to form an opinion ; the syncope, however, was incomplete ; I still retained both memory and sensation ; and I distinctly heard the persons round me say *He has fainted*, and was conscious of their efforts to rouse me from this curious condition, *which was not unpleasurable*.

‘Memory is the next to be extinguished. The dying man, who in his delirium still recognised those who approached his bedside, now knows them no longer, and soon gazes blankly at his dearest and most intimate acquaintances. Finally, he ceases to feel ; but his senses fail in a definite order of succession : taste and smell give no more signs of existence ; a thick mist veils his eyes, which assume a sinister expression ; his ear is still sensitive to sound and shock. (This is, no doubt, the reason why the ancients, to make sure that life was extinct, were wont to cry aloud into the ear of the defunct.) The dying man no longer smells, tastes, sees, or hears. There remains the sensation of touch, and he stirs restlessly in his bed, stretching out his arms, and continually changing his attitude ; he makes movements, as we have said before, analogous to those of the fœtus within its mother’s womb. Death is about to strike, but cannot terrify him, for he has no more ideas ; and he finishes life as he began it, unconsciously.’ (RICHERAND, *Nouveaux Éléments de Physiologie*, ninth edition, volume ii. page 600.)



XXVII. Philosophical History of Cooking

123. COOKING is the oldest of the arts ; for *Adam* was born fasting, and the new-born child scarce makes its entry into the world before it utters cries which can only be quieted at its mother's breast.

It is also of all arts that which has most signally advanced the cause of civilisation ; for the need of cooking taught us the application of fire, and by means of fire man became lord over nature.

If we take a broad survey, we shall discern three kinds of *cooking* :

The first, which has to do with the preparation of food, has retained the original name ;

The second is applied to the analysis of food and the ascertaining of its elements, and is usually called *Chemistry* ;

And the third, which may be called restorative cooking, is better known under the name of *Pharmacy*.

If their ends are different, they are as one in respect of their common use of fire, furnaces, and many of the same vessels.

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Thus, the same piece of beef which the cook converts into soup and *bouilli*, the chemist takes possession of to find out into how many different bodies it is resolvable, and the pharmacist causes it to emerge violently from our bodies, if perchance it gives us indigestion.

Alimentary
Progress

124. MAN is an omnivorous animal ; he possesses incisive teeth for dividing fruit, molar teeth for crushing grain, and canine teeth for tearing flesh ; and it has been remarked that the nearer man approaches to a state of primitive wildness, the stronger and more conspicuous are his canine teeth.

It is highly probable that the species was long frugivorous ; it was necessarily confined to such a diet, for man is the least agile of the animals, and his means of attack are strictly limited, so long as he goes unarmed.

But that instinct towards perfection which is inseparable from his nature was not slow to develop ; the very consciousness of his weakness led him to seek means of arming himself ; he was urged to the same end by the carnivorous instinct so clearly revealed in his canine teeth ; and as soon as he was armed, he preyed upon all the animals surrounding him, and made them a source of nourishment.

The instinct of destruction still survives ; children will almost invariably kill whatever small animals are left at their mercy, and would eat them if they were hungry.

It is not to be wondered at that man sought nourishment in flesh ; his stomach is too small, and fruit contains too few animalisable elements for his full and thorough restoration ; he could better nourish himself with vegetables ; but such a diet demands arts which can only have come in the course of centuries.

The first weapons must have been branches of trees, and these would be followed by bows and arrows.

It is specially worthy of remark that wherever man has been found, in whatever climate or latitude, he has always been found armed with the bow and arrow. Such uniformity is difficult to explain. It is not easy to see how the same sequence of ideas came to operate in the minds of individuals faced by entirely different circumstances ; we can but attribute it to some cause hidden behind the curtain of the ages.

Raw flesh has only one disadvantage, namely, its viscous nature, which causes it to cling to the teeth ; apart from this,

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it is not unpleasant to the taste. Seasoned with a little salt, it is easily digested, and clearly more nutritious than dressed meat of whatever form.

'*Mein God,*' said a Croat captain, who dined with me in 1815, 'good cheer can be had without all these trimmings. When we are in the field, and feel hungry, we shoot down the first beast that comes our way, cut off a good meaty slice, salt it a little (for we always carry a supply of salt in our *sabre-tasche*¹) and put it under the saddle, next to the horse's back; then we gallop for a few minutes, after which [moving his jaws like a man chewing lustily] *gnian, gnian, gnian*, we feed like princes.'

When the natives of *Dauphiné* go shooting in the month of September, they provide themselves with a supply of salt and pepper. If they kill a specially plump beccafico, they pluck it, season it, carry it for a while in their hats, and then eat it. They declare that this bird, so treated, tastes even better than when roasted.

Moreover, if our remote ancestors ate all their meat raw, we have not entirely abandoned the habit ourselves. The most delicate palate will respond to Arles and Bologna sausages, smoked Hamburg beef, anchovies, salt herring, and other such things, which have never been subjected to fire, but which rouse the appetite notwithstanding.

125. AFTER man had long been content to eat as the *Croats* Discovery of Fire eat, he discovered fire; a chance discovery, for fire does not exist on earth spontaneously; the inhabitants of the *Marianne Islands* had no knowledge of it.

126. FIRE once discovered, the instinct towards perfection led Cooking man to lay his meat close beside the flames, in order to dry it, and later to put it on the embers, so that it was cooked.

Meat so treated was found to be much better; it acquires more consistency, becomes easier to chew, and develops, through the scorching of the osmazome, an aroma which has not yet ceased to please.

But it was soon perceived that meat cooked on the embers cannot be kept clean; for it always brings away particles of ash or cinder, which are difficult to remove. The inconvenience

¹ The *sabre-tasche*, or *sabre-pouch*, is a kind of bag with a protecting shield or escutcheon, suspended from the baldric in which light-cavalrymen wear their sabres; it plays an important part in the tales which soldiers tell among themselves.

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was overcome by the plan of passing skewers through it, which were then placed over the glowing embers, with their ends resting on stones of a suitable height.

Such was the origin of the grill, that simple but most savoury method of cooking ; for all grilled meat is highly flavoured, through being partially smoked.

Matters were not much further advanced in the days of *Homer* ; and I hope my reader will enjoy the following account of how *Achilles* entertained in his tent three of the most eminent among the *Greeks*, one of them a king.

I dedicate the passage to the ladies, because *Achilles* was the fairest of the *Greeks*, and because his pride did not keep him from weeping when *Briseis* was torn from his embrace ; for them too I chose the elegant version of *M. Dugas-Montbel*, a mellow and complaisant author, and no mean gourmand for a *Hellenist* :

*Majorem jam crateram, Mænetiî fili, appone,
Meraciusque misce, poculum autem para unicuique ;
Clarissimi enim isti viri meo sub tecto.
Sic dixit : Patroclus dilecto obedivit socio ;
Sed cacabum ingentem posuit ad ignis jubar ;
Tergum in ipso posuit ovis et pinguis capræ.
Apposuit et suis saginati scapulam abundantem pinguedine.
Huic tenebat carnes Automedon, secabatque nobilis Achilles,
Eas quidem minute secabat, et verubus affigebat.
Ignem Mænetiades accendebat magnum, deo similis vir ;
Sed postquam ignis deflagravit, et flamma extincta est,
Prunas sternens, verua desuper extendit.
Inspersit autem sale sacro, a lapidibus elevans.
At postquam assavit et in mensas culinarias fudit,
Patroclus quidem, panem accipiens, distribuit in mensas
Pulchris in canistris, sed carnem distribuit Achilles.
Ipse autem adversus sedit Ulyssi divino,
Ad parietem alterum. Diis autem sacrificare jussit
Patroclum suum socium. Is in ignem jecit libamenta.
Hi in cibos paratos appositos manus immiserunt ;
Sed postquam potus et cibi desiderium exemerunt,
Innuît Ajax Phœnici ; intellexit autem divinus Ulysses
Implensque vino poculum, propinavit Achilli, etc.¹*

ILIAD, ix. 202.

‘ . . . straightway *Patroclus* obeys the commands of his trusty comrade. But *Achilles* sets a mighty vessel near to the sparkling

¹ I have not transcribed the original text, because few persons would have understood it ; but I thought fit to give the Latin version, because that language, which is more widely known, moulds itself perfectly on the Greek, and lends itself more readily than our own to the details and simplicity of this heroic meal.

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flames, placing therein the shoulders of a sheep, a fat goat's shoulders, and the broad back of a toothsome swine. *Automedon* holds the meat, while god-like *Achilles* carves ; he carves it into small pieces, and then he pierces with iron skewers.

'*Patroclus*, a man like to the gods, lights a great fire ; and as soon as the burnt-up wood gives forth no more than a dying flame, he lays across the embers two long skewers, sustained upon two massive stones, and sprinkles the sacred salt.

'When the meat is ready, and the feast prepared, *Patroclus* distributes bread around the table from rich baskets ; but the meat will *Achilles* himself bear round. Then he sits down facing *Ulysses*, at the other end of the table, and bids his comrade sacrifice to the gods.

'*Patroclus* casts the first-fruits of the meal into the flames, and thereafter all set their hands to the food prepared and apportioned to them. And when in the abundance of the feast they have chased away hunger and thirst, *Achilles* signs to *Phœnix* ; *Ulysses* sees the sign, he fills his mighty cup with wine, and addressing his words to the hero, thus speaks : 'Hail, *Achilles* . . .'

So did those *Greeks*, a king, a king's son, and three generals, dine, and dine well, on bread, wine, and grilled meat.

We are to believe that when *Achilles* and *Patroclus* themselves undertook the preparing of the feast, they sought to pay no ordinary honour to their noble guests ; for it was customary to leave the cares of cookery to slaves and women, as *Homer* further informs us in his descriptions, in the *Odyssey*, of the meals of the suitors.

The entrails of animals, stuffed with blood and fat, were then accounted a great delicacy (a kind of black pudding).

At that date, and doubtless long before, poetry and music formed a part of the joys of feasting. Venerable bards sang of the marvels of nature, the loves of the gods, and the feats of heroes ; they discharged the functions of a priesthood ; and it is probable that godlike *Homer* himself was born into this heaven-favoured order of men : he never could have reached such heights, had not his poetical studies begun in childhood.

Mme Dacier points out that nowhere in *Homer* is mention made of boiled meat. The *Hebrews* were more advanced, owing to their sojourn in *Egypt*. They had pots which could be placed on the fire, and in such a vessel was the soup made which *Jacob* sold so dearly to his brother *Esau*.

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It is exceedingly difficult to guess how man first succeeded in working metals ; *Tubal-Cain*, it is said, was the first exponent of the art.

In the present state of our knowledge, we work upon metals with other metals ; we take hold of them with iron tongs, forge them with iron hammers, and sharpen them with steel files ; but I have never yet met with anyone who could explain to me how the first tongs were wrought, and the first hammer made.

Banquets of
the *Orientals*
—of the
Greeks

127. COOKERY made rapid progress following the production of vessels, whether of bronze or pottery, capable of resisting fire. It became possible to add flavouring to meat, and to cook vegetables ; broths, essences, and jellies were procured ; all these things follow naturally and are complementary to one another.

The most ancient books remaining to us make honourable mention of the feasts of Eastern kings. Nor is it difficult to believe that monarchs who held sway over lands so fertile in all things, but especially in spices and perfumes, kept sumptuous tables. Details, however, are wanting ; we only know that *Cadmus*, who brought writing to *Greece*, had been cook to the king of *Sidon*.

It was among the soft and pleasure-loving peoples of the East that the custom arose of eating reclined on couches set round the table.

This effeminate refinement was not everywhere received with equal readiness. Nations which set special store by strength and courage, or among whom frugality was accounted a virtue, long held out against it ; but *Athens* adopted it, and it gradually became and remained general throughout the civilised world.

Cooking and its amenities were held in high esteem by the *Athenians*, as was natural in a race so elegant and eager for the new ; kings, rich citizens, poets, and scholars led the way, and philosophers themselves did not feel called upon to refuse pleasures wrung from the breast of nature.

By what we read in old authors, we cannot doubt that their banquets were brought to the highest pitch of luxury.

Hunting, fishing, and trade procured them a great part of the things still held in most esteem, and the demand was general enough to make the price of them excessively high.

All the arts contributed to the adornment of their tables,

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round which the guests reclined on couches covered with rich stuffs.

They made a study of enhancing the virtues of good cheer by agreeable conversation ; and table-talk became a science.

The songs, which customarily began with the third course, now lost their old severity, and were no longer confined to the praise of gods and heroes, or the celebration of historic feats. New themes were found in friendship, pleasure, and love, and these were sung with a sweetness never to be equalled in the harsher and less liquid speech of to-day.

The wines of *Greece*, which we still find excellent, were examined and classified by connoisseurs, from the mildest to the most potent ; and there were banquets at which the whole scale was traversed, and when, contrary to the custom of to-day, the glasses grew larger in proportion to the increasing goodness of the wine.

The prettiest women still further embellished these voluptuous gatherings ; dances, games, and all imaginable diversions prolonged the entertainment far into the night. Pleasure was sucked in through every pore, and more than one *Aristippus*, arriving *Plato's* partisan, departed faithful to *Epicurus*.

Scholars made haste to write on an art which procured such exquisite delights. *Plato*, *Athenæus*, and others have preserved their names for us. But alas ! their works have perished ; and if there is one to be regretted beyond the rest, it is the *Gastronomia* of *Achestrades*, the friend of one of the sons of *Pericles*.

'This great writer,' says *Theotimus*, 'traversed land and sea in quest of first-hand knowledge of the best that each produces. He made himself acquainted in his travels, not with the customs of nations, since they are not to be exchanged ; but he entered the laboratories wherein the delights of the table are prepared, and trafficked only with such as might serve his pleasures. His poem is a treasury of science, and contains no single line that is not a precept.'

Such was the condition of cookery among the *Greeks*¹ ; and such it remained until the day when a handful of men, having made themselves a habitation on the banks of *Tiber*, extended

¹ Despite these happy efforts, *Athens* never reached the culinary zenith ; she sacrificed too much to sweet things, fruits and flowers ; she never had the refined flour bread of *Imperial Rome*, nor the latter's Italian spices, cunning sauces, and Rhenish white wines.—
DE CUSSY.

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their dominion over the neighbouring states, and at last overran the world.

Banquets of
the *Romans*

128. So long as the *Romans* were a race fighting only for independence, or to win the mastery over neighbours as poor as themselves, good cheer was unknown among them ; their very generals were simple ploughmen, and lived on vegetables, etc. Frugivorous historians do not fail to praise those early times, when frugality was still held in high honour. But when their conquests extended into *Africa*, *Sicily*, and *Greece*, when they had feasted at the cost of their defeated foes, in countries where civilisation was more advanced than in their own, they began to bring back with them to *Rome* whatever preparations had most subtly pleased their taste among the foreigners ; and there can be no doubt the novelties were well received.

The *Romans* sent a deputation to *Athens*, to bring back the laws of *Solon* ; later, they went thither for instruction in philosophy and letters. In pursuit of elegance, they learned the delights of the banquet ; and there returned to *Rome* not only orators, philosophers, rhetoricians, and poets, but also cooks.

With time and the long succession of triumphs which enriched *Rome* with the wealth of all the world, the luxury of their table reached a point not far short of incredible.

Nothing was left untasted, from the ostrich to the cicada, from the dormouse to the wild boar¹ ; they left no experiment untried in their search after appetising sauces, and successfully employed many substances the use of which is beyond our understanding, such as assafoetida, rue, etc.

The known world was laid under contribution, and their armies and explorers brought truffles and the guinea-fowl from *Africa*, rabbits from *Spain*, pheasants from *Greece* (whither they had migrated from the banks of the *Phasis*), and peacocks from the furthest ends of *Asia*.

¹ GLIRES FAPSI: *Glirres isicio porcino, item pulpis ex omni glirium membro tritis, cum pipere, nucleis, lasere, liquamine, farcies glirres, et sutos in tegula positos, mittes in furnum, an farsos in clibano coques.*

Dormice were considered a delicacy ; scales were sometimes placed on the table, for ascertaining their weight. *Martial* has a well-known epigram on the subject of dormice (XIII. 59):

*Tota mihi dormitur hiems, et pinguior illo
Tempore sum quo me nil nisi somnus alit.*

Lister, the gourmand physician of a gourmand queen (*Queen Anne*), commenting on the advantage of using scales in cookery, observes that if twelve larks weigh less than twelve ounces, they are scarcely eatable ; that if they weigh exactly twelve ounces, they are worth eating ; but that if they weigh thirteen they are fat and delicious.

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The wealthy *Roman* took great pride in his garden, and grew not only such familiar fruits as pears, figs, and grapes, but also whatever new discoveries were brought from foreign parts : apricots from *Armenia*, quinces from *Sidon*, strawberries from the valleys of *Mt. Ida*, and cherries, the spoil of *Lucullus'* conquests in the kingdom of *Pontus*. And that all these were imported into *Italy*, in widely different circumstances, is sufficient proof that the impulse was general, and that men were proud to contribute, as in duty bound, to the enjoyment of the sovereign people.

Among comestibles, a prominent place was given to fish. Preferences were established in favour of certain kinds, and particularly with respect to the latitude in which they had been caught. Fish from distant waters were shipped to *Rome* in jars full of honey ; and when individual specimens exceeded normal dimensions, they were sold at greatly enhanced prices, owing to the keen demand among consumers, some of whom were wealthier than kings.

Drinks were sought no less eagerly, and made the object of as much fond care. Greek, Sicilian, and Italian wines were all esteemed by the *Romans* ; and as their price depended on the year and district of their growth, a kind of birth certificate was inscribed on every amphora :

O nata mecum consule Manlio.—HORACE.

Nor was this all. In obedience to that instinct of exaltation which we have before referred to, ways were sought of increasing the bouquet and flavour of wines ; spices, essence of flowers, and drugs of various kinds were infused into them, and the concoctions handed down to us by contemporary writers under the name of *condita* must have burnt the mouth and had the most powerful effects on the stomach.

Thus already, at that early period, the *Romans* dreamed of alcohol, which was only discovered more than fifteen centuries later.

But their luxury in the matter of food and drink was equalled and even surpassed by their lavish treatment of the accessories.

The finest material and most cunning workmanship were employed for all the plate, furniture, and dishes. The number of courses gradually increased up to and beyond twenty, and at every course all that had been used in the preceding course was removed.

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There were special slaves allotted to each convivial function, and those functions were methodically distinguished. Rare perfumes embalmed the banquet-hall. Heralds proclaimed the merit of dishes worthy of special note, announcing in set terms their claims to an ovation. In a word, nothing was forgotten which might give an edge to appetite, sustain attention, or prolong enjoyment.

This luxury, be it said, was not without its gross absurdities. Such were those feasts at which the birds and fishes served might be counted by the thousand, and dishes which had no merit but their excessive cost, like that composed of the brains of five hundred ostriches, and another which contained the tongues of five thousand talking birds.

In the light of these examples it seems to me easy to believe in the fabulous sums spent on his table by *Lucullus*, and the costliness of those famous banquets in the hall of *Apollo*, at which it was his rule to wear out every known device for the gratification of his guests' sensuality.

Resurrection
of *Lucullus*

129. THOSE glorious days might dawn again before our own eyes ; to renew the marvels thereof we lack nothing but a *Lucullus*. But let us suppose that a man of the most unlimited means desires to celebrate some great financial or political triumph, and to honour the occasion with a memorable feast, for which no expense is to be spared ;

Let us suppose that he summons all the arts to adorn the place of feasting, bids his cooks use all their resources upon the fare, and enjoins his cellarers to drench the guests with the choicest contents of his binns ;

That he has two pieces played before them, at this solemn dinner, by the most accomplished actors ;

That throughout the meal, music, as well vocal as instrumental, is rendered by the most renowned exponents of either art ;

That he has engaged the prettiest and airiest sylphs of the *Opera* to dance a ballet in the *entr'acte* between dinner and coffee ;

That the evening culminates in a ball, at which two hundred women, chosen from among the fairest, find four hundred partners, chosen for their elegance ;

That the sideboard bears an inexhaustible supply of hot drinks, cooling drinks, and drinks ice-cold ;

That midnight ushers in a cunningly composed collation, to fill all with renewed vigour ;

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That the servants are both smart and comely, the lighting brilliant, and, as a last perfection, that the amphitryon takes it on himself to convey his guests both from and back to their homes in comfort.

Were such a banquet carefully prepared, well methodised, and ordered with due understanding, everyone who knows *Paris* will agree with me that there would be that in the morrow's memoirs to make *Lucullus'* own steward turn in his grave.

In pointing out what would need to be done to-day, to rival the feasts of the proud *Roman*, I have sufficiently enlightened the reader as to what accessories were considered indispensable at his meals ; they included clowns, singers, mimes, fools, and everything that could serve to increase the enjoyment of guests who had come together with diversion as their sole aim and object.

What was done among the *Greeks*, and later among the *Romans*, then among our own forebears in the Middle Ages, and finally what is done among ourselves at the present day, has its source in the nature of man, who impatiently seeks the end of his career, and in the disquietude which torments him whenever the sum-total of life at his disposal is not fully occupied.

130. LIKE the *Athenians*, the *Romans* ate reclining ; but their adoption of the habit came about in a less direct manner. *Lectisternium et Incubitatum*

Couches were at first used by them only at the sacred feasts held in honour of the gods ; then the chief magistrates and persons of high rank adopted them, and gradually the custom became general, and was retained until the beginning of the fourth century of the Christian era.

These couches, which originally had been no more than simple benches, with a covering of skins stuffed with straw, soon received their share of the luxury bestowed on everything that pertained to banqueting. They were made of the rarest woods, encrusted with gold, ivory, and precious stones, and loaded with the softest and most richly embroidered cushions.

The same couch ordinarily received three persons, who lay upon their left side, using their elbow as a support.

Was this attitude, called *lectisternium* by the *Romans*, more comfortable or more convenient than that which we have adopted, or, more properly, to which we have returned ? I believe not.

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Physically considered, incubitation exacts a certain expenditure of energy in the maintenance of equilibrium ; nor can the arm-muscles long support the weight of a part of the body without discomfort.

The physiologist has also a word to say : imbucation proceeds in a less natural manner ; the food goes down less smoothly, and settles less evenly in the stomach.

And above all, the ingestion of liquids, or action of drinking, was a far more difficult matter ; extreme care must have been required to avoid spilling wine out of the huge cups which glittered on the tables of the great ; and it was doubtless during the reign of the *lectisternium* that the saying arose, *there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip*.

Nor can it have been easier to eat cleanly in a reclining posture, especially if we bear in mind that many of the guests wore long beards, and used their fingers, or at most only a knife, to convey food to their mouths ; for the use of forks is a modern innovation ; none were discovered in the ruins of *Herculaneum*, although many spoons were found there.

It is to be feared, moreover, that decency was apt to be forgotten during meals at which the bounds of temperance were frequently transgressed, on couches shared by both sexes, and when it was no rare thing to see a party of guests asleep together.

*Nam pransus jaceo, et satur supinus
Pertundo tunicamque palliumque.*

And in fact the first attack on the *lectisternium* was made on moral grounds.

As soon as the Christian religion, having survived the persecution which stained its cradle with blood, began to make headway and gain influence, its ministers lifted up their voices against intemperance. And especially they cried out against the length of meals, at which every pleasure was freely indulged, in violation of all their precepts. Themselves by choice professing an austere rule of life, they set gourmandism among capital sins, bitterly denounced the free intercourse of the sexes, and above all else attacked the custom of eating from couches, which they held to be the outcome of culpable softness, and the chief cause of the abuses they deplored.

They threatened, and were heard ; couches ceased to adorn the banquet-hall, and man returned to his old way of sitting

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at table ; and, by a rare piece of good fortune, the change, prescribed on moral grounds, detracted not at all from the pleasures of the table.

131. DURING the period we are now concerned with, convivial Poetical poetry underwent a new transformation, and acquired in the mouths of *Horace*, *Tibullus*, and other writers nearly their contemporaries, a soft and languorous character quite foreign to the muse of *Greece* :

*Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem.*—HORACE.

*Quæris quot mihi basiationes
Tuæ, Lesbia, sint satis superque.*—CATULLUS.

*Pande, puella, pande capillulos
Flavos, lucentes ut aurum nitidum :
Pande, puella, collum candidum
Productum bene candidis humeris.*—GALLUS.

132. THE five or six centuries which we have reviewed in the last few pages were great times for cookery, and for all lovers and cultivators thereof ; but the arrival of the Northern races, or rather their irruption, utterly transformed the face of things ; and those glorious days were followed by a prolonged and dreadful period of darkness.

Invasion
of the
Barbarians

On the appearance of the barbarians, the art of cooking vanished, together with all the sciences of which it is the companion and consolation. Most of the cooks were massacred in their masters' palaces ; some, scorning to cater for the feasts of their country's oppressors, took to flight ; and the few who stayed to offer their services had the shame of seeing them refused. Those fierce mouths and leathern gullets were insensible to the soft appeal of delicate cheer. Vast haunches of beef and venison, immeasurable quantities of the strongest liquors, were enough to charm them ; and because the usurpers never laid aside their arms, their meals not seldom degenerated into orgies, and the banquet-hall was frequently the scene of bloodshed.

But it is not in the nature of things for excess to be of long duration. The victors at length wearied of cruelty ; they allied themselves with the vanquished, took on some of the hue of civilisation, and began to know the sweets of social life.

The change was reflected in their meals. A host now offered

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to his guests something beyond a mere bellyful, and they in turn perceived that an effort had been made to please them ; a more decent joy animated them, and the duties of hospitality began to include an element of affection.

These improvements, which took effect about the fifth century of our era, received a further impetus under *Charlemagne* ; for, as we learn from his Capitularies, that great king was at personal pains to ensure that his realm should be able to minister to the luxury of his table.

Under *Charlemagne* and his successors, the banquet-hall assumed a chivalrous and gallant aspect ; the ladies brought their charms to embellish the court, and distributed rewards for valour ; pages clad in cloth of gold, and maidens whose innocence not always excluded the desire to please, bore pheasants with gilt claws, and peacocks with outspread tails, to the tables of princes.

This, it is well to observe, was the third time that women, who had been segregated alike by the *Greeks*, the *Romans*, and the *Franks*, were summoned to adorn the feast. Alone among nations, the *Ottomans* have remained deaf to their soft appeal ; but dark storm-clouds lower even now over that unsociable race, and thirty years shall not elapse before the stern voice of the cannon proclaims the emancipation of the odalisques.

The movement, once begun, has gone on from strength to strength, with succeeding generations, down to our own day.

Women, even of the highest rank, thought fit to busy themselves in the interior of their houses over the preparation of food, holding it to be a part of the duties of hospitality, which continued to be observed in *France* until the end of the seventeenth century.

Under their pretty hands food sometimes underwent fantastic transformations ; eels came to table with serpents' tongues, hares with the ears of a cat, and other such frivolities. They made great use of the spices then newly brought by *Venice* from the East, and of the perfumed essences of *Arabia* ; for example, fish was cooked in rose-water. The luxury of the table was held to consist chiefly in abundance of dishes ; and matters went so far that our kings felt constrained to put a curb on excess, in the form of sumptuary laws, which, however, met with the same reception as those drawn up in similar circumstances by Greek and Roman legislators. They were laughed at, evaded, and ignored, and only remained in the statute-books as historic monuments.

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Good cheer, then, continued to be enjoyed to the fullest possible extent, especially in abbeys, convents, and monasteries ; for the wealth accumulated by those establishments was less exposed to the hazards and risks of the internal warfare which so long played havoc throughout the realm.

It being certain that the ladies of *France* have at all times had a hand in the business of their kitchens, to a greater or less degree, we may safely conclude that the indisputable pre-eminence which French cooking has always enjoyed in *Europe*, is due to their intervention, and that it was chiefly won through a vast number of cunning, light, and toothsome preparations, such as none but women could ever have conceived.

I have said that good cheer was enjoyed to the *fullest possible extent* ; but there were times when it was an impossibility. Sometimes kings themselves were at the mercy of chance for their royal suppers. We know that in the civil wars they more than once went hungry to bed ; and on a certain evening *Henry IV* would have made a very meagre meal, if he had not had the good sense to admit a worthy burgher to his table, who was the fortunate possessor of the only turkey in the town where the king lay that night.

Meanwhile, the art of cooking progressed by insensible degrees ; the crusaders endowed it with the shallot, torn from the plains of *Ascalon* ; parsley was imported from *Italy* ; and long before the days of *Louis IX*, sausage-makers were turning pork to good account, thereby laying the foundations of those great fortunes of which we have since seen memorable examples.

Pastrycooks were equally successful, and the output of their industry cut an honourable figure at every banquet. When *Charles IX* ascended the throne, they already formed a considerable corporation ; and from him they received certain statutory privileges, including that of making sacramental wafers.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, the *Dutch* brought coffee into *Europe*.¹ *Soliman Aga*, that puissant *Turk* so dearly beloved of our forefathers, gave them their first taste of it in 1660 ; in 1670 it was publicly exposed for sale by an

¹ The *Dutch* were the first *Europeans* to export the coffee-plant from *Arabia* ; they transplanted it in *Batavia*, and thence brought it to *Europe*. *M. de Ressout*, Lieutenant-general of Artillery, sent for a specimen from *Amsterdam*, and presented it to the *Jardin du Roi* ; this was the first ever seen in *Paris*. *M. de Jussieu* has left a description of it ; in 1673, it seems, it was an inch in diameter and stood five feet high. The fruit is very pretty, being not unlike the cherry in appearance.

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American at *Saint-Germain Fair* ; and the first *café* appeared, in the *rue Saint-André-des-Arts*, adorned with mirrors and marble tables, much after the manner of the *café* of to-day.

Sugar came in about the same time¹ ; and *Scarron*, complaining of his sister's avarice, which led her to reduce the size of the holes in the sugar-caster, proves that in his day that utensil was already in general use.

It was in the seventeenth century, also, that brandy came into prominence. Distilling, the notion of which had been brought back by the returning crusaders, had till then remained a mystery only practised by a small number of adepts. In the early part of the reign of *Louis XIV* stills became commoner, but it was only under *Louis XV* that brandy began to be generally drunk ; and it is only a few years since alcohol was first extracted, after countless experiments, in a single operation.

And finally, the same period witnessed the introduction of tobacco ; so that sugar, coffee, brandy, and tobacco, four substances of paramount importance both commercially and as a source of revenue, are scarcely two centuries old.

Age of
Louis XIV
and *Louis XV*

133. UNDER such fair auspices did *Louis XIV* ascend the throne ; and in his brilliant reign, when all the arts obeyed a single impulse, not the least rapid strides were made by the art of banqueting.

The *fêtes* and tourneys of those days are still remembered, when all *Europe* was drawn to *France*, and lances and the brave armour of chivalry gleamed their last in the sun, ere they yielded for ever to the bayonet and the cannon's brutal strength.

All those *fêtes* ended and were crowned with sumptuous banquets ; for such is the nature of man, that he can never be completely happy while his taste remains ungratified ; so true is this, that to express perfection in anything, we say that it is done with taste.

By a necessary consequence, those who ordered the preparation of these feasts became men of note ; and not without good reason, for they were required to display many different qualities, including inventive genius, the power of organisation, a sense of proportion, firmness to exact obedience, and unflinching punctuality.

¹ Despite the passage in *Lucretius*, sugar was unknown to the ancients. It is a product of art ; and without crystallisation, the cane only yields an insipid and worthless liquid.

XXVII. *Philosophical History of Cooking*

It was on these great occasions that the *surtout* was first seen, a magnificent device, combining sculpture with painting, which offered a pleasing spectacle to the eye, and sometimes an appropriate setting for the circumstances or the hero of the *fête*.

The *fête*, then, called for grand, even gigantic efforts on the part of cooks ; but soon less numerous assemblies and daintier fare became the fashion, and exacted a more reasoned care and a more scrupulous attention to details.

At the exclusive tables of royal favourites, and at suppers given by courtiers and financiers to a chosen few, cooks who were also artists won admiration for their talents, and strove, with a praiseworthy spirit of rivalry, to surpass one another's feats.

In the latter part of the reign of *Louis XIV* the names of the most famous cooks were almost always coupled with those of their patrons, who took pride in the association. Thus twin merits were made one ; and the most glorious names appeared in the cookery-books after the preparations they had patronised, invented, or given to the world.

There are no such combinations to-day ; not that we are less curious in gourmandism than our ancestors, far from it, indeed, but we are less concerned with the name of him who rules in the regions below. Applause by inclination of the left ear is the sole tribute we pay to the artist who has charmed our senses ; and the restaurateur, who is cook to all the world, alone obtains that nominal praise which makes him the equal of millionaires. *Utile dulci*.

It was for *Louis XIV* that the prickly pear, which he called *the good pear*, was imported from the Levantine *Échelles*, and to his old age we owe the invention of liqueurs.

That prince sometimes suffered from extreme weakness, and experienced the lack of vitality which often comes to a man after the age of sixty ; brandy, therefore, was mixed with sugar and sweet essences, to make potions for him, which after the fashion of the day were called *cordials*. Such was the origin of the liquorist's art.

It is noteworthy that at about the same period the art of cooking flourished equally at the English court. *Queen Anne* was a decided gourmand ; she did not disdain to discuss matters personally with her cook, and English cookery-books contain many preparations bearing the designation *after Queen Anne's fashion*.

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While the star of *Mme de Maintenon* was in the ascendant, the art remained at a standstill in *France* ; but it resumed its upward march under the Regency.

The *Duc d'Orléans*, a witty prince and one worthy to have friends, partook with them of meals as choice as they were well contrived. I am able to state, on unimpeachable authority, that distinguishing features of those meals were highly appetising sauces, fish *à la matelote*, tasting as fresh as if they had only just been taken from the water, and turkeys gloriously truffled.

Truffled turkeys ! ! ! whose fame and price go soaring ever skywards ! Kind stars, whose advent doth make scintillate, radiate, tripudiate all gourmands of whatever category !

The reign of *Louis XV* proved no less favourable to the alimentary art. Eighteen years of peace more than sufficed to heal the wounds of sixty years of war ; the wealth created by industry, widely disseminated through trade, and freely claimed by the farmers of revenue, put an end to extreme inequalities of fortune, and the spirit of conviviality spread through all classes of society.

And beginning from this period ¹ there began to be generally observed in meals more order, propriety, and elegance ; and many refinements crept in which have since come more and more into prominence, until they threaten to exceed all bounds and to become merely ludicrous.

In this reign too, kept women and the *petite maison* called forth efforts on the part of cooks which were surely not without profit to their art.

Great facilities are granted to him who caters for a large party and healthy appetites ; with venison, game, and butcher's-

¹ According to information collected by myself from among the inhabitants of various districts, a dinner for ten persons was composed, in 1740, somewhat as follows :

1st course	.	.	.	{ <i>Bouilli</i> . An entrée of roast veal. <i>A hors-d'œuvre</i> .
2nd course	.	.	.	{ A turkey. A vegetable dish. Salad. A <i>crème</i> (sometimes).
Dessert	.	.	.	{ Cheese. Fruit. A pot of preserves.

Plates were only changed three times, viz. after the soup [i.e. *bouillon* and *bouilli*], for the second course, and for dessert.

Coffee was rarely drunk, but often a cherry brandy or pink liqueur, at that time a novelty.

XXVII. *Philosophical History of Cooking*

meat, and plentiful supplies of fish, he easily contrives a meal for sixty persons.

But to coax mouths that never open but in a simper, to beguile vapourish women, to give *papier mâché* stomachs occupation and rouse unsubstantial forms whose appetites are but the shadow of desire, requires more genius, penetration, and sheer hard work than the solution of one of the most difficult problems in the geometry of the infinite.

134. HAVING now arrived at the reign of *Louis XVI* and the days of the Revolution, we shall not enter minutely into the details of changes we ourselves have witnessed ; we shall be content with a broad survey of the various improvements which have taken place since 1774 in the art of banqueting.

Those improvements have been directed either at the art itself, or at the customs and social institutions thereto pertaining ; and although the two continually co-operate and react one upon the other, we have thought fit, for the sake of clearness, to approach them separately.

135. THE ranks of every profession concerned with the sale or preparation of food, including cooks, caterers, confectioners, pastrycooks, provision-merchants, and the like, have multiplied in ever-increasing proportions ; and, what proves that the increase has only come about in response to a real demand, their number in no way hinders their prosperity.

Improvements in the Art

Physics and chemistry have been called in to aid the alimentary art ; the most eminent scientists have thought it not beneath them to apply their wisdom to the first of all our needs, and improvement has followed improvement, from the labourer's simple broth to transparent extracts that are never served but in vessels of crystal or of gold.

New professions have arisen ; that, for example, of the *petit-four* pastrycook, who occupies a place between the pastrycook properly so called and the confectioner. In his domain are biscuits, macaroons, fancy cakes, meringues, and much else made, for the special delight of the sweet-toothed, from butter, sugar, eggs, and flour.

The art of preserving also has become a profession in itself, whereby we are enabled to enjoy, at all times of the year, things naturally peculiar to one or other season.

Great advances have been made in horticulture ; tropical

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fruits grow in hot-houses beneath our very eyes ; new vegetables have been produced by culture or importing, among them a species of cantaloup melon which bears none but sound fruit, thus daily giving the lie to the proverb.¹

The wines of all countries have been cultivated or imported, and make their appearance in regular order : Madeira to open up the way, French wines to accompany the main courses, and African and Spanish wines to crown the work.

French cookery has annexed made dishes of foreign extraction, such as curry and the roast beef of *England* ; relishes, such as caviare and soy ; drinks, such as punch, negus, and others.

Coffee has come into general use, as a food in the morning, and after dinner as a tonic and exhilarating drink. A wide variety of vessels, utensils, and accessories of every sort has been invented, so that foreigners coming to *Paris* find many objects on the table the very names of which they know not, nor dare to ask their use.

And from all these facts we may draw the general conclusion, that even as I write these lines, everything that precedes, accompanies, or follows after meals is being conducted with a method and address clearly indicative of a will to please, such as should warm the heart of every lover of good cheer.

Last Perfection

136. THE word *gastronomy* was revived from the Greek ; the sound of it seemed sweet in French ears, and albeit imperfectly understood, simply to pronounce it is enough to bring joyous smiles to every physiognomy.

We begin to distinguish gourmandism from greed and gluttony ; it has come to be regarded as a natural inclination no one need be ashamed of, a social quality, welcome to the amphitryon, profitable to the guest, and beneficial to the art : and gourmands have their place among all other amateurs who share a common object of enthusiasm.

The spirit of conviviality has spread through all classes of society ; parties grow more frequent daily, and every host aims at offering to his guests whatever of special merit he himself has encountered as a guest in more exalted spheres.

As a result of the new pleasure we have come to take in one

¹ *To find a good melon you must try fifty.*

It seems that melons, such as we now grow them, were unknown to the *Romans* : what they called *melo* and *fispo* were species of cucumber, which they ate with very sharp sauces.—*APICIUS, de re coquinaria.*

XXVII. Philosophical History of Cooking

another's company, we have adopted a more convenient distribution of our time, and devote the hours between dawn and dusk to business, reserving the remainder for the pleasures that accompany the feast and follow after it.

The breakfast-party has become an institution, and is a meal with a character all its own, by reason of the dishes composing it, the negligée toilette permitted, and the gaiety peculiar to such occasions.

Tea-parties are another novelty, and provide an unparalleled form of comessation, in that, being offered to persons who have already dined well, it supposes neither appetite nor thirst, and has no end but distraction, nor any basis but its pleasant taste.

Political dinners have come into fashion, and have regularly recurred during the last thirty years, whenever it has been necessary to bring a particular influence to bear on a large number of wills ; as meals, they call for the best of cheer, which goes utterly unheeded, and they are only retrospectively enjoyable.

Finally, the restaurant has made its appearance : an entirely new and inadequately recognised institution, the effect whereof is such that whoever is master of three or four pistoles can infallibly, immediately, and with no more trouble than the wishing, procure all the positive indulgence of which taste is susceptible.



XXVIII. On Restaurateurs

137. A restaurateur is one whose trade consists in offering to the public an ever-ready feast, the component dishes of which are served in separate portions, at fixed prices, on the demand of each consumer.

The establishment is called a *restaurant*, he who directs it the *restaurateur*. The general list of dishes, bearing the name and price of each, is called the *carte*, or bill of fare, the particular list of portions consumed, with the price due for payment, the *carte à payer*, or bill.

Few, among all the crowds that nightly patronise the restaurants, give a thought to the genius and penetration which must have belonged to him who conceived and made the first restaurant.

We shall therefore proceed to follow the thread of ideas which must needs have led to this most popular and convenient institution.

Origin

138. As late as 1770, after the glorious days of *Louis XIV*, the intrigues of the Regency, and the long and peaceful ministry

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of *Cardinal Fleury*, the stranger within the gates of *Paris* found few resources in the way of good cheer.

He was forced to have recourse to the fare provided at his inn, which was usually bad. There were one or two hotels boasting a *table d'hôte*, or ordinary, which, however, with few exceptions offered none but the barest necessities, and could only be had at a stated hour.

He had, it is true, caterers to fall back on ; but they only supplied complete meals, and whoever wished to entertain a few friends was obliged to order his requirements in advance ; so that the visitor who had not the good fortune to be invited to dine at some wealthy house would leave our great city in total ignorance of the resources and delights of French cookery.

An order of things hurtful to such daily interests could not long continue ; and there were not wanting thinkers who dreamed of a change for the better.

And at last arose a man of judgment, who perceived that an active cause could not remain without its due effect ; that with the same need recurring daily at the same times, potential consumers would resort thither where they could be certain of that need being agreeably satisfied ; that if a wing of chicken were detached in favour of the first comer, there would be no lack of a second who would be content with a leg ; that the abscision of a first slice in the obscurity of the kitchen would not put the remainder of the joint to shame ; that if each guest were able to dispute about the price and quality of the dishes which he ordered, there would be no end to the already considerable difficulties of the undertaking, but that a wide variety of dishes, combined with fixity of price, could be relied upon to suit the capacity of all purses.

Much else did this man think of, as may easily be surmised. He was the first restaurateur, and created a profession which leads to certain fortune, whenever the follower thereof displays good faith, method, and ability.

139. THE advent of the restaurant in *France*, and its subsequent adoption by the rest of *Europe*, has proved a boon to all citizens, and of extreme importance to the art.

Advantages
of the
Restaurant

1°. By this means, a man may dine at whatever hour best suits him, according to the circumstances in which he is placed by his affairs or pleasures ;

2°. He can be sure of not going beyond the sum which

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he thinks fit to allow for his meals, for he knows the price of every dish beforehand ;

3°. Having once come to a reckoning with his purse, the consumer may indulge at will in a light or solid, sweet or savoury repast, wash it down with the best French or foreign wines, make it aromatic with coffee, and perfume it with the liqueurs of both worlds, and all with no limit but the vigour of his appetite or the capacity of his stomach. The restaurant is the gourmand's *Eden* ;

4°. It is, further, a most convenient thing for the traveller, the foreigner, the man whose family is in the country, and for all, in a word, who have no cooking facilities at home, or are temporarily deprived of them.

Up to the date we mentioned above (1770), the rich and powerful had almost a monopoly of two great advantages : they alone travelled rapidly, and they alone constantly enjoyed good cheer.

With the advent of public coaches which cover fifty leagues in twenty-four hours, the first of these privileges has disappeared ; the advent of the restaurateur has destroyed the second ; by his means, good cheer has become general.

Whoever, having fifteen or twenty pistoles at his disposal, sits down to the table of a first-class restaurateur, that man eats as well as and even better than if he were at the table of a prince ; for the feast that is offered him is no whit less splendid, and moreover, having all the dishes at his command, he is undisturbed by any personal consideration.

A Restaurant
described

140. THE interior of a restaurant, examined in some detail, offers to the keen eye of the philosopher a spectacle eminently worthy of his interest, by reason of the variety of situations contained within its four walls.

The far end of the room is occupied by the numerous solitary diners, who order loudly, wait impatiently, eat rapidly, pay, and depart.

At another table are some folk from the country, content with a very frugal meal, yet relishing a dish which is strange to them, and frankly enjoying the novelty of their surroundings.

Near by sit a husband and wife, *Parisians* by the hat and shawl hanging above their heads ; it is clearly long since they had anything to say to each other ; they have taken seats at the theatre, and we are ready to lay odds that one of them will sleep the performance through.

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Further off are two lovers, if we may judge by the attentions of the one and the other's coquetry, and the gourmandism of both. Pleasure shines in their eyes ; and, by the choice that governs the composition of their meal, the present serves both to divine the past and to foresee the future.

In the centre of the room is a table monopolised by regular patrons, who as a rule claim special terms, and dine at a fixed price. They know the names of all the waiters, who let them into the secret of what is freshest and newest ; they are a sort of stock-in-trade to the restaurateur, a centre of attraction, like the decoys used in *Brittany* to attract wild-duck.

Also in evidence are a number of those curious individuals whom everyone knows by sight, and no one by name. These gentry are as much at their ease as if they were at home, and from time to time endeavour to get into conversation with their neighbours. They belong to a type only met with in *Paris*, which has neither property, income, nor employment, but yet contrives to spend freely.

Finally, there is a sprinkling of foreigners, mostly English ; these last cram themselves with double portions, insist on all the most expensive dishes, drink the strongest wines, and do not always leave without assistance.

The accuracy of our description may be tested any day of the week ; and if it succeeds in rousing curiosity, perhaps it will also serve to point a moral.

141. It is not to be doubted that opportunity, and the persuasive influence of things under their very eyes, leads many people to indulge themselves beyond the warrant of their faculties, nor that this is a frequent cause of indigestion, in the case of delicate stomachs, and not seldom of untimely sacrifices to the least exalted of the *Venuses*. Inconveniences

But, what is far more dangerous to the social scheme, we are convinced that solitary refection breeds egotism, by accustoming the individual to look only to himself, to hold aloof from his surroundings, and to dispense with every tie ; and from their conduct before, during, and after meals, it is an easy matter, in ordinary society, to single out from a party of guests those who habitually live in restaurants.¹

¹ Among other things, when a dish of ready-cut food is being handed round, they help themselves, and deposit it in front of them, without passing it to the neighbour whose wants they are so little accustomed to consider.

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Rivalry

142. WE have said that the advent of the restaurateur proved highly beneficial to the art.

And in fact, as soon as experience proved that a well-contrived *ragoût* was enough to make its inventor's fortune, self-interest, most powerful of incentives, fired all imaginations and set every cook to work.

Analysis has revealed esculent parts in substances formerly reputed worthless ; new foodstuffs have been discovered, the old ones much improved, and both combined in a thousand variations. Foreign inventions have been imported, and the whole world laid under contribution, until a single meal may well exhibit a complete course of alimentary geography.

Fixed-Price
Restaurants

143. WHILE the art thus rose to higher flights, as well in point of price as of discovery (for novelty must always be paid for), the very same motive, namely hope of gain, impelled it in a contrary direction, at least in the matter of expense.

Certain restaurateurs made it their aim to combine good cheer with economy, perceiving that by catering for modest incomes, which necessarily predominate, they could be certain of attracting large numbers.

They sought out, among inexpensive substances, those which by skilful preparation could be made most appetising.

Two inexhaustible sources were at hand, in the form of butcher's-meat, which in *Paris* is always good, and sea-fish, of which there is never a shortage ; and by way of complement, there were fruit and vegetables, made cheaper by improved methods of cultivation. They calculated what was strictly necessary to fill a stomach of ordinary capacity, and to quench any but a cynical thirst.

They observed that there are many dishes which owe their excessive price to novelty or the time of year, but which can be readily supplied a little later, when the obstacle has ceased to exist ; and in the end they reached a point when, at a profit to themselves of from 25 to 30 per cent., they were able to offer to their clients, for two francs or even less, an ample dinner, and one which any gentleman can be content with, since it would cost at least a thousand francs a month to maintain a table so well and variously furnished at home.

From this point of view, the restaurateur may be said to have rendered a signal service to that important part of the population of any great city, which consists of foreigners, military men,

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and clerks ; he was led by his own interest to the solution of a problem seemingly adverse to it, namely, how to make good cheer available at a moderate price, and even cheap.

The restaurateurs who have followed this course have met with no less recompense than their brethren at the opposite end of the scale ; they encounter fewer reverses, and their fortune, though slower to materialise, is proportionately the surer ; for if they make a smaller profit, they make it every day, and it is a mathematical truism that when an equal number of units are brought together at a given point, they yield an equal total, whether they are brought together by tens, or one by one.

Amateurs still recall the names of certain of the artists who shone in *Paris* in the early days of the restaurant. We may here mention *Beauvilliers*, *Méot*, *Robert*, *Rose*, *Legacque*, the brothers *Véry*, *Henneveu*, and *Baleine*.

Some of these establishments owed their prosperity to special causes : for example, the *Veau Qui Tette* to pigs' trotters ; the . . . to grilled tripe ; the *Frères Provençaux* to cod done with garlic ; *Véry* to truffled entrées ; *Robert* to dinners ordered in advance ; *Baleine* to the personal care he took to procure the best fish ; and *Henneveu* to certain mysterious chambers on his fourth floor. But of all these heroes of gastronomy, none has more right to a biographical notice than *Beauvilliers*, whose death was announced in the journals of 1820.

144. *Beauvilliers*, who set up in business in 1782, was for *Beauvilliers* more than fifteen years the most famous restaurateur in *Paris*.

He was the first to combine the four essentials of an elegant room, smart waiters, a choice cellar, and superior cooking ; and when certain of those whom we have mentioned above sought to equal him, he never lost ground in the contest, because he had only a step to go to be level with the progress of the art.

During the two successive occupations of *Paris*, in 1814 and 1815, vehicles of all nations were constantly at his door ; he knew all the heads of the foreign contingents, and learned to speak all their languages as well as was necessary for his business.

Towards the end of his life, *Beauvilliers* published a work in two volumes 8vo, entitled *L'Art du Cuisinier*, or *The Complete Cook*. This work, the fruit of long experience, bears the seal of an enlightened practice, and still commands the same respect with which it was received on its first appearance. Never

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before had the art been handled with such method and accuracy. The book ran into several editions, and considerably simplified the various works which have succeeded, but never surpassed it.

Beauvilliers was the possessor of a prodigious memory ; he would recognise and greet, after the lapse of more than twenty years, persons who had only eaten once or twice in his establishment ; he had also, in certain cases, a method of procedure peculiar to himself. When he became aware that a party of wealthy folk had sat down at one of his tables, he would approach them with a very zealous air, bow to the ground, and flatter his guests with the most marked attention.

He would point out here a dish to be avoided, there one to be ordered instantly, before it should be too late ; a third, which none of the party dreamed of ordering, he would order himself, and send, at the same time, for wine from a cellar, the key of which he produced from his own pocket ; in a word, he assumed so gracious and engaging a tone, that all these *extra* articles seemed so many favours conferred by him. But this amphytrionic rôle lasted but a moment ; having fulfilled it, he withdrew from the scene ; and ere long the swollen bill, and the bitterness of *Rabelais'* quarter of an hour, amply established the difference between a host and a restaurateur.

Beauvilliers made his fortune, unmade it, and made it again several times over ; we do not know in what circumstances death overtook him ; but his outlets were such that we do not think his successor can have inherited much spoil.

The Gastro-
nome in the
Restaurant

145. It will be found, upon examining the bill of fare at representative restaurants of the first class, notably that of the *Véry* brothers and the *Frères Provençaux*, that he who would dine therein has a choice, for the elements of his meal, of at least :

- 12 soups.
- 24 *hors-d'œuvre*.
- 15 or 20 beef entrées.
- 20 mutton entrées.
- 30 chicken or game entrées.
- 16 or 20 of veal.
- 12 of pastry.
- 24 of fish.
- 15 of roast meat.
- 50 side-dishes.
- 50 dessert dishes.

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In addition, the fortunate gastronome can wash his selections down with at least thirty kinds of wine, to suit his taste, from Burgundy to Cape wine and Tokay, and with from twenty to thirty kinds of liqueur, to say nothing of coffee and mixed drinks, such as punch, negus, syllabub, and the rest.

Of these various component parts of an amateur's dinner, the chief are of French origin, such as the fresh meat, fowl, and fruit ; some are imitated from the *English*, as beef-steak, Welsh rabbit, punch, etc. ; some come from *Germany*, as sauerkraut, Hamburg smoked beef, Black Forest fillets ; some from *Spain*, as olla podrida, garbanços, Malaga raisins, Xerica pepper-cured ham, and certain liqueurs ; some from *Italy*, as macaroni, Parmesan cheese, Bologna sausages, polenta, ices, and liqueurs ; some from *Russia*, as dried meat of various sorts, smoked eels, caviare ; some from *Holland*, as salt cod, cheeses, pickled herring, curaçao, anisette ; some from *Asia*, as Indian rice, sago, curry, soy, Schiraz wine, and coffee ; some from *Africa*, as Cape wines ; and lastly, some from *America*, as potatoes, pineapples, chocolate, vanilla, sugar, etc. ; all which sufficiently upholds the statement we have elsewhere given utterance to, that a meal such as may be had in *Paris* is a cosmopolitan whole, in which every part of the world is represented by its products.



XXIX. A Model Gourmand

The History of *M. de Borose* 146. *M. de Borose* was born in 1780. His father was secretary to the king. He lost his parents early in life, and found himself the possessor, while yet but a youth, of forty thousand *livres* in the funds. Such a sum was a fortune in those days ; now, it is no more than what is strictly necessary to keep the wolf from the door.

A paternal uncle saw to his education ; he learned Latin, not without wondering that when everything could be expressed in French, so much trouble should be taken over learning to say precisely the same thing in other words. Nevertheless, he made progress, and when he came to *Horace*, was converted, discovering so much pleasure in the contemplation of ideas so elegantly clad, that he took no small pains to familiarise himself with the tongue spoken by that pithy poet.

He also learned music, and after various experiments, decided in favour of the piano. He deliberately avoided the more abstruse problems of that musical implement,¹ and, relegating

¹ The piano was made to assist composition and accompany song. Played alone, it is a cold and unexpressive instrument. The *Spaniards* have a word, *bordonear*, to express the action of playing stringed instruments.

XXIX. *A Model Gourmand*

it to its proper function, was content with a sufficient mastery over it to be able to accompany song.

But within this sphere he was considered to excel even the professors of the art, for the reason that he never sought to call attention to himself ; he made neither eyes nor arms,¹ but conscientiously performed the duty imposed on all good accompanists, of supporting and making the most of the singer.

Under the ægis of his youth, he lived unscathed through the worst days of the Revolution ; being conscribed when his turn came, he hired a substitute who bravely took the field in his place ; whereupon, duly fortified with his *Sosia's* death certificate, he found himself in a comfortable position to rejoice at our triumphs or shed tears over our reverses.

M. de Borose was short, but admirably proportioned. As to his face, it was cast in a sensual mould, and we shall best convey a notion of it, by saying that could *Michot* of the *Français*, *Gavaudan* of the *Variétés*, and the vaudevillist *Désaugiers* have been brought together in the same room with him, all four would have seemed members of one family. Upon the whole, his person was admitted to be handsome, and he had sometimes every reason to know it.

The choice of a profession he found no easy matter ; he tried more than one, but discovered some objection to them all, and at last settled down to a life of busy leisure ; that is to say, he joined several literary societies, sat on the welfare committee of his district, subscribed to sundry philanthropical institutions, and what with these and his estate, which he managed with exemplary prudence and care, he had, like any other man, his office, affairs, and correspondence.

Upon reaching the age of twenty-eight, he bethought himself of marrying, would only meet his intended at table, and, at the third interview, felt sufficiently convinced that she was at once pretty, good, and intelligent.

Brief, however, was the conjugal bliss of *M. de Borose* ; he had been married scarcely more than eighteen months, when his wife died in childbed, bequeathing him everlasting grief for her untimely departure, and, by way of consolation, a daughter whom he named *Herminie*, and of whom more hereafter.

¹ Musical slang: *to make eyes* is to gaze heavenwards, with an expression as of one about to swoon ; *to make arms* is to raise the elbows and shoulders as though overcome with emotion ; *to make 'brioches'* is to miss an intonation or play a wrong note.

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M. de Borose found no lack of pleasure in his various occupations. But he discovered in time that even in the choicest company there are petty jealousies, patronage, and pretentious airs. All these trifles he laid to the account of humanity, which is nowhere perfect, and pursued his duties no less assiduously ; but obeying, albeit unconsciously, the decree writ by fate upon his features, he came by degrees to depend more and more upon the pleasures of taste.

M. de Borose used to say that gastronomy was nothing but reflective appreciation applied to the art of amelioration.

He said with *Epicurus*¹ : ' Was man then made to spurn the gifts of nature ? Comes he to this earth only to cull its bitter fruits ? For whom are the flowers which the gods make grow beneath the feet of mortals ? . . . We but do the will of Providence, if we yield ourselves up to that which it inclines us to ; our duties are its laws, our desires are of its inspiration.'

He said, with the Sebusian sage, that good things are for good folk ; else we should fall into absurdity, and believe that God created them for sinners.

The first preoccupation of *M. de Borose* was with his cook, to whom he sought to reveal the true significance of his functions.

He told him that the skilful cook, who might well be a man of science in theory, was always one in practice ; that the nature of his functions set him midway between the chemist and the physician ; he even went the length of saying that the cook, being charged with the maintenance of the animal machine, was superior to the pharmacist, whose usefulness is only occasional.

And he added, in the words of a learned and witty doctor, ' that a cook must have mastered the art of modifying food by the action of fire ; an art unknown to the ancients. It is an art for the sake of which our days must be given up to deep study and profound cogitations : for he must needs have pondered long and painfully over the products of our globe, who by skilful use of seasonings can disguise the bitterness of certain dishes, and make others more savoury, selecting always the best ingredients for his work. The European cook shines above all others in the art of contriving these wondrous mixtures.'²

¹ Albert, *Physiologie des Passions*, vol. i. p. 241.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 196.

XXIX. *A Model Gourmand*

His words did not fall on deaf ears ; and the *chef*,¹ duly filled with a sense of his importance, always bore himself with the dignity proper to his calling.

Time, reflection, and experience taught *M. de Borose* that, the number of dishes in a meal being practically determined by custom, a good dinner is little dearer than a bad one ; that it does not cost five hundred francs more a year to drink only the best wines ; and that everything depends on the will of the master, the order he establishes in his household, and the energy he instils into those whose services he hires.

Built upon such foundations, *M. de Borose's* dinners rose to a classic and solemn eminence ; the fame of their excellence was spread abroad ; it became a glorious distinction to have been summoned to partake thereof, and there were those who boasted of their charms, without ever having had the privilege of testing them.

He never invited any of those pseudo-gastronomes who are in truth mere gluttons, whose bellies are abysses, and who eat up all of everything everywhere. He readily found among his friends, in the three first categories, fit and pleasant guests who, while they savoured each dish with right philosophical attention, and gave to the work all the time that it demands, yet never forgot that a moment comes when reason says to appetite : *Non procedes amplius* (Thou shalt go no further).

It often happened that merchants came to him with delicacies of supreme distinction, and gladly sold them to him at a reduced price, because they knew well that the same would be consumed calmly and with due reflection, that the noise thereof would echo in society, and that the reputation of their shops would wax proportionately.

The number of guests at *M. de Borose's* dinners rarely exceeded nine, nor were the dishes numerous ; but the master's insistence, and his exquisite taste, together made those dishes perfect. His table was always furnished with the season's choicest products, whether in point of rarity or precociousness ; and the service was conducted with a care that left nothing to be desired.

The conversation during the meal was always general, always

¹ In a well-ordered household, the cook is called the *chef*. He has under him the assistant *entrée-man*, the pastrycook, the roaster, and the scullions (this last office being an institution apart). The scullions are the cabin-boys of the kitchen ; like them, they are often well beaten, and like them, they sometimes work their way upwards.

Gastronomical Meditations

amusing, and not seldom instructive ; this last quality being due to a very special precaution of the host's.

Every week a distinguished but impecunious sage, whom *M. de Borose* lodged at his own expense, descended from his seventh floor and laid before him a list of subjects suitable for table-talk. These the amphitryon was careful to set going as soon as the topics of the day showed symptoms of exhaustion : and the ruse infallibly reanimated the conversation, and cut short those political discussions which obstruct ingestion and digestion equally.

Twice a week he invited ladies, being careful so to arrange matters that each found among the guests a cavalier to wait exclusively upon herself : a precaution which gave infinite pleasure, for the veriest prude feels humiliated when she is unnoticed.

On those days, and those alone, a modest game of *écarté* was permitted ; on the others, none were allowed but piquet and whist, both grave and thoughtful games, and hall-marks of a sound education. But more often the evening was given up to pleasant talk, interspersed with songs, which *Borose* accompanied with the skill we have referred to above ; nor was he by any means insensible to the applause which always greeted his performance.

On the first Monday in every month, the curé of *Borose* dined with his parishioner, and was sure of the most courteous and attentive reception. The conversation, on that day, preserved a more serious character, but not, however, such as to exclude harmless pleasantries. The good priest surrendered wholly to the charms of these dinners, and sometimes caught himself wishing that a month contained four first Mondays.

On the same day, too, the young *Herminie* emerged from *Mme Migneron's* establishment,¹ where she was a boarder ; and as a rule that lady would accompany her pupil. With each visit *Herminie* displayed a new grace ; she adored her father, and when he gave her his blessing, and kissed her upturned brow, no two beings in the world were happier than they.

Borose was ever careful to see that the money which he spent upon his table should be spent to the best moral purpose.

¹ *Mme Migneron* (*Remy*) directs, at No. 4 *rue de Valois*, *Faubourg du Roule*, a house of education under the patronage of *Mme la Duchesse d'Orléans* ; the locality is superb, the school perfectly equipped, the masters the best in *Paris*, and, what most nearly touches the Professor, with all these advantages the prices are on a scale to suit quite modest incomes.

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He dealt only with such tradesmen as were conspicuous for the uniform quality of the things they sold, and the moderation of their prices ; them he recommended to his friends, and helped in other ways besides, for he was accustomed to say that people who are over-hasty in quest of fortune are often indifferent as to the means they employ in the making of it.

His wine-merchant soon grew rich, for he proclaimed him innocent of adulteration, a quality rare even among the *Athenians* in the days of *Pericles*, and none too common in the nineteenth century.

We believe it was he who advised and directed the policy of *Hurbain*, the restaurateur in the *Palais-Royal* ; *Hurbain*, who provides for two francs a dinner which would cost double that sum elsewhere, and whose road to fortune is the more sure in that the crowd of his clients increases daily as a direct result of the moderation of his prices.

The food which was removed from our gastronome's table was never left to the discretion of the servants, who were amply compensated otherwise ; whatever retained a fair appearance had its destination allotted by the master.

Well informed, through his position on the relief committee, of the needs and morals of a great number of those within his jurisdiction, he was certain of bestowing his gifts in the proper quarters ; and left-over portions, still very desirable, regularly chased the wolf from the door and were a cause of rejoicing ; for example, the tail-end of a fat pike, the crest of a turkey, a piece of fillet steak, pastry, etc.

But in order to make these offerings yet more profitable, he took care to announce them for Monday morning, or the morning after a feast-day, thus obviating the cessation of work on holidays, combating the abuses of *holy Monday*,¹ and making sensuality the antidote of debauchery.

When *M. de Borose* discovered, in the third or fourth class of tradespeople, an exemplary young couple whose conduct

¹ Most of the labouring class in *Paris* work on Sunday morning to finish the job they have in hand, deliver it to their employer, and are then paid for it ; after which they are free to enjoy themselves for the rest of the day.

On Monday morning they form parties together, make a common fund of what money is left to them, and do not separate until the whole is spent.

This state of affairs, which was universal a hundred years back, has been partly remedied by the forethought of owners of workshops, and by economical savings associations ; but the evil is still a serious one, and much time and labour is lost, to the profit of places of amusement, restaurants, public-houses, and taverns both in the central faubourgs and in the suburbs.

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announced the qualities upon which the prosperity of nations chiefly depends, he paid them the compliment of a visit and made a point of asking them to dinner.

On the appointed day, the young woman would be certain to meet ladies who talked to her of the interior economy of the home, and the husband, men who would discuss commerce and manufacture with him.

These invitations, the motive of which was well understood, became highly prized, and all strove to deserve them.

In the meantime, the young *Herminie* grew and developed in the shelter of the *rue de Valois* ; and we owe our readers a portrait of the daughter, as an integral part of her father's biography.

Mlle Herminie de Borose is tall (5 feet 1 inch), and her form embodies the lightness of a nymph and the grace of a goddess.

Sole fruit of a happy marriage, her health is perfect, and her physical strength remarkable ; she fears not the sun's fiercest rays, and the longest walk leaves her undismayed.

From a distance you would think her dark, but a nearer inspection proves her hair to be chestnut, her eyebrows black, her eyes azure blue.

Most of her features are pure Grecian, but her nose is a Gallic nose ; so charming and graceful is that nose, that a committee of artists, having deliberated during three successive dinners, decided that that most French of types is at least as worthy as any other to be immortalised by brush, chisel, and graver's burin.

The foot of this young person is astonishingly small and shapely ; the Professor has so praised, and even flattered her because of it, that on New Year's Day, 1825, and with her father's approval, she made him a present of the prettiest little black satin shoe, the which he sometimes shows to the elect, and uses it to prove that extreme sociability acts upon forms even as it acts upon characters ; for he maintains that a small foot, such as we prize so highly nowadays, is the product of art and culture, that it is hardly ever found among peasants, and almost always denotes a person whose ancestors have long lived at ease.

When *Herminie* combs back the forest of her hair, and confines a simple robe within a belt of ribands, she is altogether charming, nor would you say that flowers, pearls, or diamonds could add to her beauty.

Her conversation is easy and unaffected, and few would

XXIX. *A Model Gourmand*

suspect that she knows all our best authors ; but there are times when she grows animated, and then the aptness of her remarks betrays her secret ; which she no sooner perceives than she blushes, with lowered eyes ; and her blush but proves her modesty.

Mlle de Borose plays equally well on harp and piano ; but she prefers the former instrument, moved by I know not what instinctive partiality for the celestial harp that angels use to play, and the golden harps so nobly praised by *Ossian*.

Her voice, too, is celestially sweet and pure, which, however, does not prevent her from being a little shy ; she sings without needing to be pressed, but fails not, before beginning her song, to bestow so bewitching a glance on her audience, that she might sing out of tune, like so many others, and yet the hearers would be denied strength to notice it.

Needlework she has not neglected, a source of innocent pleasure and an ever-present antidote to boredom ; she works like a fairy, and whenever any new stitch or device is brought out, the first sempstress of the *Père de Famille* always comes to teach it to her.

Herminie's heart has not yet spoken ; hitherto filial piety has filled her cup of happiness ; but she passionately loves dancing.

When she takes her place in a quadrille, she seems to grow two inches taller, and you would think her about to fly ; yet her dancing is restrained, and her steps quite free from affectation ; she is content to glide lightly round the room, loose-limbed and naturally graceful ; but now and again there escapes an unmistakable hint of latent powers, and we suspect that if she chose to exert herself, *Mme Montessu* would have a rival :

E'en when the bird walks, still we see 'tis winged.

With this sweet girl, whom he had taken away from her boarding-school, and in the enjoyment of his carefully administered fortune and the well-deserved esteem of the world, *M. de Borose* was living the happiest of lives, and peacefully looked forward to its long continuation ; but hope is ever deceitful, and the future lies beyond human control.

In the middle of last March, *M. de Borose* was invited to spend a day in the country with some friends.

It was one of those prematurely hot days, the immediate forerunners of Spring, and there were heard, coming from beyond the horizon, those low rumblings which signify, in the pro-

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verbial phrase, that 'Winter is breaking his neck': but the party were not thereby deterred from setting forth on a walk. But soon a frown overspread the face of heaven, dark clouds gathered, and a fierce storm burst on them, with thunder, rain, and hail.

The walkers scattered, and took shelter where they best might ; *M. de Borose* sought refuge beneath a poplar-tree, whose lower branches, spread out umbrella-wise, seemed to promise certain protection.

Fatal refuge ! the tree-top rose to the very clouds as though in quest of the electric fluid, and the rain, streaming down its branches, made the swiftest of conductors. A frightful crash was heard, and the unlucky walker fell dead, without having time so much as to breathe a last sigh.

Thus cut off by the death which *Cæsar* wished for, but on which there were no means of commenting, *M. de Borose* was buried with all proper rites and ceremonies. A long procession, on foot and in carriages, followed his hearse to the cemetery of *Père Lachaise* ; his praise was upon all lips, and when a friend's voice pronounced a moving speech above his grave, it found an echo in the hearts of all there present.

Poor *Herminie* was overwhelmed by the disaster ; she gave way neither to convulsions nor hysteria, nor sought to hide her grief in bed ; but she wept so unrestrainedly, so bitterly, and so long for her father, that her friends hoped that the very excess of her grief would be its natural antidote ; for we are not made of stuff to withstand such anguish long.

And time has had its unfailing effect on that young heart ; *Herminie* now can speak her father's name without melting into tears ; but she talks of him with such sweet piety, with sorrow so ingenuous, love so undying, and in accents so profound, that it is impossible to hear and not to partake of her emotion.

Happy will he be, to whom *Herminie* grants the right to accompany her, and lay a funeral wreath upon her father's tomb.

In a side-chapel of the Church of —, there may be seen, every Sunday at the midday Mass, a tall and lovely girl, accompanied by an aged dame. Bewitching is her form, but a thick veil masks her features. Yet it must needs be that those features are well known, for behold, around the chapel stands a host of youths turned suddenly devout, all of them most elegantly clad, and some of them unquestionably handsome.

XXIX. *A Model Gourmand*

147. ONE day as I entered the *Place Vendôme* from the *rue de la Paix*, I was stopped by the train of the richest heiress in *Paris*, then unmarried, and returning from the *Bois de Boulogne*.
An Heiress's Train

The cavalcade was composed as follows :

1. The fair damsel herself, mounted on a handsome bay, which she managed to perfection ; her riding-habit blue and full-skirted, her hat black, with white feathers ;

2. Her tutor, riding by her side, with the grave features and important bearing proper to his functions ;

3. A group of some twelve to fifteen aspirants, each seeking to attract attention, one by his ardour, another by feats of horsemanship, a third by his melancholy air ;

4. A wonderfully turned out chariot, ready in case of rain or weariness ; fat coachman, footman no larger than your fist ;

5. Mounted domestics in every sort of livery, very numerous, and pell-mell.

They rode by . . . and I resumed my meditations.



XXX. Bouquet

Gastro-
nomical
Mythology

148. *Gasterea* is the Tenth Muse : the delights of taste are her domain.

The empire of the world were hers, would she but claim it ; for the world is nothing without life, and all that lives takes nourishment.

Her chief delight is in hillsides where the vine grows, or the fragrant orange-tree, in leafy dells where the truffle comes to perfection, and in lands abounding with fruit and game.

When she deigns to show herself, she comes in the guise of a young girl ; round her waist is a flame-coloured girdle ; her hair is black, her eyes are azure blue, and all her contours full of grace ; *Venus* is not more beautiful, but above all *Gasterea* is prettiness incarnate.

Rarely does she show herself to mortals ; but her statue consoles them in their longing. Alone of all sculptors, one was admitted to contemplate her myriad charms, and such was the skill of that man of art, that whoso beholds his work seems to behold the form and features of his best beloved.

XXX. *Bouquet*

Of all the places where her altars are, *Gasterea* loves none so well as that city, the world's queen, which imprisons *Seine* between wide-terraced palaces.

Her temple is built upon the far-famed hill to which *Mars* gave his name ; it stands there on a mighty plinth of fair white marble, and a hundred avenues lead up to it from all sides.

Deep below that hallowed rock are those mysterious chambers where Art puts Nature to the question, and bends her to his laws.

There air and water, iron and flame, controlled by cunning hands, divide and make whole again, pulverise and amalgamate, and achieve effects the cause of which is all unknown to the vulgar.

And thence issue, at predetermined epochs, marvellous receipts : but the authors thereof delight in namelessness, for their happiness is in their conscience, their reward in the knowledge that they have enlarged the compass of their art and won new bliss for men.

The temple, a matchless monument of simple and majestic architecture, is upheld by a hundred columns of Eastern jasper, and crowned by a dome like to the very vault of heaven.

We shall refrain from too minute description of that noble fane ; enough to say that the sculptures adorning its pediment, and the frieze that encircles it round about, are sacred to the memory of men who have deserved well of their fellows by useful inventions, such as application of fire to the needs of life, the plough, and others of a like nature.

Far from the dome, and deep within the inner sanctuary, the statue of the goddess stands ; her left hand rests upon a stove, and in her right she holds the product dearest to her worshippers.

The canopy above her head is of crystal, upheld by eight pillars of the same, and those pillars, ever flooded with electric flame, cast a glow as of divinity about the holy place.

The cult of the goddess is simple : every day at the rising of the sun, her priests, entering, remove the floral wreath that adorns her effigy, and lay a new wreath in its stead, chanting meanwhile one of the many hymns made in praise of the immortal nymph who showers such blessings on mankind.

The priests are twelve in number, and the eldest of the twelve is their leader ; they are chosen from among the wisest of men, and the fairest, other things being equal, win the preference. Their age is the age of maturity ; old they must grow, but

Gastronomical Meditations

infirmity they know not : from that the air which they breathe in the temple preserves them.

The festivals of the goddess are in number even as the days of the year, for she is daily prodigal of her benevolence ; but there is one day sacred above all the rest, the TWENTY-FIRST OF SEPTEMBER, called the *grand gastronomical gaudy-day*.

On that solemn day the queen of cities is wreathed from earliest dawn in a mist of incense ; the people, crowned with garlands, throng the streets chanting the praise of the goddess ; the citizens greet one another by endearing and familiar names ; all hearts are full of kindness ; the air is laden with sympathy, and breathes love and friendship over all.

The first part of the day is given over to these rejoicings ; then, at the appointed hour, the crowd goes up to the temple, where the sacred feast is prepared.

In the holy of holies, at the very feet of the goddess, stands the table reserved for the college of the priesthood ; and a second table, laid for twelve hundred persons, is ready beneath the dome for guests of either sex. All the arts have combined to adorn those solemn boards, nor was anything so elegant ever seen in the palaces of kings.

Slow-stepping and with rapt countenances the priests arrive ; they are clad in robes of whitest Kashmir wool, edged with incarnadine embroidery, and girdles of the same hue restrain the folds thereof ; health and goodwill are written on their features ; they greet one another, and are seated.

Already servants, clothed in fine linen, have set before them the first dishes of the feast : no common preparations these, made to appease vulgar cravings ; nothing is served at that august table but what has been found worthy of it, and belongs by choice of matter and subtle craft to transcendental spheres.

Worthily, too, the venerable diners play their part ; their talk is calm and full of substance, touching the marvels of nature and the might of art ; the movement of their jaws is smooth and gentle ; each bite seems to have its special accent ; and if perchance they roll their tongues along their gleaming lips, the author of the favoured dish wins for himself immortal glory.

The drinks, one following another in due succession, are worthy of the feast ; twelve maidens pour them, chosen, for this day alone, by a cabinet of artists and sculptors ; they are clothed in the old Athenian garb that smiles on beauty, yet puts not modesty to shame.

XXX. *Bouquet*

The priests of the goddess make no hypocritical pretence of averting their gaze, while pretty hands pour for their delight the choicest liquors of both worlds ; but all as they admire the Creator's fairest handiwork, wise restraint still sits upon their brow ; and their manner of giving thanks, and of drinking, expresses the twofold sentiment.

Around that mystic table kings, princes, and illustrious foreigners perambulate ; they walk in silence, carefully noting what they see ; they are come for instruction in the high and subtle art of eating well, an art of which whole nations still are ignorant.

And while these things are going forward in the inner sanctuary, universal joy radiates among the guests at the table beneath the dome.

And this is the chief cause of their gaiety : no man is seated next the woman to whom he has already said all his say. Such was the will of the goddess.

Chosen and summoned to that vast table are the wise of either sex who have enriched the art with new discoveries, hosts who with perfect grace fulfil the duties of French hospitality, cosmopolitan sages to whom society owes useful or agreeable importations, and charitable folk who nourish the poor with the rich spoils of their superabundance.

The table is in form a circle, enclosing a wide space wherein a throng of seekers and distributors offer and parade all that each guest can desire from the furthest corners of the earth.

There, admirably displayed, is all that bounteous nature has created for the nourishment of man ; and her treasures are multiplied a hundred-fold not only by association one with another, but as well by the metamorphoses wrought on them by art, the wizard art that draws the two worlds close together, confounds far separate realms, and brings remoteness to our doors ; the air is heavy with the fragrance of these cunning preparations, and balmy with intoxicating fumes.

Boys meanwhile, as neat as they are pretty, move round the circle's outer rim, and incessantly bear wine in cups which have now a rich glow as of rubies, now the more modest hue of the topaz-stone.

Ever and anon skilled musicians, from lofty galleries about the dome, make the temple ring again with melodious strains of simple but entrancing harmony.

Then heads are raised, attention closely held, and for a space all conversations cease, to be resumed thereafter with the greater

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charm ; for this new gift from heaven seems to refresh imagination and make every heart beat faster.

And when the pleasures of the table have run their allotted course, the priestly twelve draw near ; they come to take part in the festivities, to mingle with the guests and sip with them that Mocha which the Eastern sage permits to his disciples. The spicy fluid steams in cups of beaten gold, and the fair acolytes of the inner sanctuary go round the assemblage bearing sugar to sweeten its bitterness withal. Charming are those girls ; yet such is the influence of the air breathed in *Gasterea's* temple, that no woman's heart, of all there present, has room for jealousy.

At length the high priest intones a hymn of thanksgiving ; all voices join in the chant, and the instruments also ; heartfelt homage rises to the heavens, and the service is at an end.

This is the signal for the popular banquet to begin ; for there is no true festival without rejoicings of the people.

Tables, the ends of which no eye can discern, are ranged along every street, in every square, in front of every palace. Folk sit down wherever they may chance to be, all ranks and ages mingling without distinction ; hand clasps hand in cordial greeting, each man helps his neighbour, and every face is aglow with happiness.

Although the great city is then but one immense refectory, the generosity of private individuals assures abundance, while a paternal government watches over all to see that there is no exceeding the last limits of sobriety.

And soon brisk and lively music is heard, announcing the dance, that exercise beloved of youth.

Vast halls have been prepared, with well-sprung floors, and furnished with all variety of refreshment.

Crowds assemble therein, some to perform, some to encourage the performers, some to be spectators only. Laughter greets old men who, lit by a short-lived flame, pay ephemeral homage to beauty ; but the cult of the goddess and the solemnity of the day excuse them.

Far into the night the merriment goes on ; lightness both of heart and foot are universal, and not without regret is the last hour heard, proclaiming rest. But none resists the summons : all has been done with decency ; each reveller goes home contented with his day, to fall asleep full of hope for the coming events of a year begun under such fair auspices.

End of the First Part

THE SECOND PART

TRANSITION

If my readers have followed me thus far with that attention which I have sought both to rouse and to sustain, they will have seen that I have constantly kept a twofold end in view : first, to determine the root principles of gastronomy, so that it may take that rank among the sciences which undeniably belongs to it ; secondly, to propound an exact definition of what is rightly meant by gourmandism, and to put an end, once and for all, to the deplorable confusion which has so long existed between that social quality and gluttony or intemperance.

The equivocation was introduced by intolerant moralists, who, carried away by too much zeal, chose to see excess in what was nothing more than intelligent enjoyment ; for the treasures of creation were never made to be trampled under foot. Thereafter it was further disseminated by unsociable grammarians, who defined in the dark and laid the law down in verba magistri.

It is time to have done with such an error, for by now the whole world understands the matter : who is there, to-day, that does not openly, nay, with pride, confess to a tinge of gourmandism ? Who that is not insulted if accused of gluttony, voracity, or intemperance ?

On these two cardinal points, it seems to me that what I have already written amounts to proof positive, and must suffice to persuade all but such as refuse to be convinced. Hence I might lay aside my pen, and look upon my self-appointed task as finished ; but in the course of investigating a subject so intimately bound up with all the ways of men, I have remembered many things that seemed good to set down on paper : anecdotes not hitherto given to the world, witticisms born under my very eyes, recipes of the highest distinction, and other similar hors-d'œuvre.

Scattered here and there in the theoretical part of my work, they would have destroyed its continuity ; but collected at the end, I believe they may give pleasure to the reader, not only as a source

Transition

of amusement in themselves, but as well because they embody a number of experimental truths and practical developments.

I must also be allowed, as I insisted in my Preface, to indulge in a little discreet autobiography, such as can occasion neither comment nor dispute. I have but sought a just reward for my work, in those parts of it where I am with my friends again. For it is when the sands of life run low that I grow dearest, and friends of necessity make part of it.

Nevertheless I will not deny that in reading over the more personal passages I felt a qualm of apprehension. This uneasiness was the result of my own most recent reading, and the comments made on certain Memoirs even now in everybody's hands.

I was afraid lest some embittered wretch, that had slept ill upon an ill digestion, might cry 'Here's a Professor who says no harm of himself! Here's a Professor who never tires of paying himself compliments! Here's a Professor who . . . here's a Professor whom . . . !'

To whom I shall reply in advance, putting myself on guard, that he who speaks ill of no man has at least the right to use himself with some indulgence; and that I can see no reason why I, who have ever been a stranger to all thoughts of hatred, should be cut off from my own benevolence.

With this reply, which has the advantage of being grounded in reality, I believe I may rest in peace in the shelter of my philosopher's robe: and as for those that still find fault, I here and now declare them bad sleepers. Bad Sleepers! 'Tis a new insult, and I might well take out a patent for it, being the first to have discovered that it is an excommunication in itself.

VARIETIES



I. The Curé's Omelette

ALL the world knows that for more than twenty years past the throne of beauty in *Paris* has been occupied by *Mme R*¹ It is common knowledge, also, that she is most charitably disposed, and at one time took an active interest in most of the enterprises having for their object the alleviation of distress, which is sometimes more acutely felt in the Capital than elsewhere.²

Wishing one day to consult *M. le Curé* of . . . , in connection with one of these matters, she called on him at five o'clock in the afternoon, and was astonished to find him already at table.

The fair denizen of the *rue du Mont-Blanc* believed that everyone in *Paris* dined at six ; she did not know that ecclesi-

¹ *Mme Récamier*.

² Those are specially to be pitied, whose straits are unperceived; for in justice to *Parisians* be it said, that they are charitable by nature and ready givers of alms.

In the year X, I had the paying of a small weekly pension to an aged nun, who lived in a sixth-floor attic, and was paralysed in half her limbs. The worthy woman received enough help from her neighbours to enable her to live in something approaching comfort, and to feed, besides, a sister who had thrown in her lot with her.

astics ordinarily begin early, owing to the habit in which many indulge of partaking of a light collation later in the evening.

Mme R . . . , then, would have retired, but the curé begged her to stay ; perhaps because the affair to be discussed was not such as to interfere with his dinner, perhaps because a pretty woman can never be a kill-joy, or perhaps because he saw that nothing was wanting but an interlocutor to turn his dining-room into a perfect gastronomical *Elysium*.

For in truth his table was admirably laid, and the cloth spotless ; old wine sparkled in a crystal flagon, the porcelain was white as snow and of the choicest quality, the dishes were kept warm with boiling water, and a handmaid, both neat and canonical, stood ready to receive his orders.

The meal was a compromise between frugality and extreme refinement. A bowl of crayfish soup had been emptied and removed, and on the table were a salmon-trout, an omelette, and a salad.

‘ My dinner,’ said the curé with a smile, ‘ denotes something which perhaps you are unaware of ; to-day is a day of fasting, by the rules of the Church.’ Our dear friend bent her head, signifying assent ; but there is sound authority for believing that she blushed, the which by no means prevented the curé from proceeding with his meal.

Execution had begun already on the trout, the upper end of which was in process of consumption ; the sauce proclaimed a master-hand, and inward satisfaction was written on the priestly brow.

When the trout had disappeared, he attacked the omelette, which was round, tight, and done to a turn.

At the first impact of the spoon, thick gravy, lovely to behold and very fragrant, issued from the paunch, till the whole dish seemed full of it ; and our *Juliet* has confessed that it brought the water to her mouth.

Nor was her sympathetic bearing lost upon the curé, accustomed as he was to surveying the passions of mankind ; and as if in answer to a question which *Mme R* . . . had studiously refrained from asking, ‘ ’Tis a tunny omelette,’ said he : ‘ my cook understands them marvellously, and few ever taste without congratulating me.’ ‘ I can well believe it,’ replied she who dwelt in the *Chaussée-d’Antin* ; ‘ never was so tempting an omelette seen on our worldly tables.’

Next came the salad. (I commend salad to all who have

I. The Curé's Omelette

faith in me ; it refreshes without weakening, and soothes without irritation : I often call it the renewer of youth.)

The dinner was no hindrance to conversation. The business which had occasioned the visit was discussed, as well as the war then raging, topics of the day, the hopes of the Church, and other such table-talk as makes a bad dinner passable and adorns a good one.

Dessert came in due course, consisting of a Septmoncel cheese, three calville apples, and a pot of preserves.

Finally, the maid set a little round table, such as was formerly used for loo, by the curé's elbow, and on it placed a cup of hot and limpid Mocha, the scent of which filled all the room.

Having sipped his coffee, the curé said grace, adding, as he rose from his chair, 'I never take strong drinks ; they are a luxury which I offer to my friends, but make no use of myself. I am saving them up to fall back on in my old age, if God in His goodness spares me.'

Meanwhile time had not stood still : the clock struck six, and *Mme R* . . . hastened back to her carriage, for she had that day invited several friends to dinner, including myself. She arrived late, *as is her wont* ; but arrive at last she did, still deeply moved by what she had seen and smelt.

Throughout the meal nothing was talked of but the curé's dinner, and especially his tunny omelette. *Mme R* . . . specifically praised its plump and rounded shapeliness, and so much being granted, all agreed that it must have been exquisite, each working out a perfect sensual equation to his own satisfaction.

The subject being at length exhausted, others took its place, and it was forgotten. But I, ever desirous of spreading useful truths, thought it my duty to rescue from obscurity a dish which I believe to be as wholesome as it is delicious. I therefore enjoined my master cook to possess himself of the recipe in its minutest details ; and I now offer it to all amateurs with the more pleasure in that I have never yet found it in any cookery-book.

TAKE, for six persons, two soft carps' roes, scour well, and place for five minutes in water previously brought to the boil and slightly salted, to blanch.

To make a
Tunny
Omelette

Have ready a piece of fresh tunny, about the size of a hen's egg, and a small shallot, cut in pieces.

Mash and well mix the roes and tunny, place the whole in

a casserole with a piece of the best butter, and fry until the butter is thoroughly melted. This is the special feature of the omelette.

Then take a second piece of butter, at discretion, bruise parsley and chives into it, and place in the fish-shaped dish in which the omelette is to be served ; squeeze the juice of one lemon over it, and place on the fire.

Next beat up twelve eggs (the fresher the better) ; add the fried roe and tunny, and mix thoroughly.

Then cook the omelette in the ordinary manner, taking care to make it long, thick, and soft. Turn it out smartly into the dish prepared as above, and serve without an instant's delay.

This is a dish to be reserved for very special breakfasts, when amateurs foregather who know what they are about and eat deliberately ; if it be washed down with old wine, there will be marvels seen.

THEORETICAL NOTES

1. The roe and tunny should be fried lightly and not allowed to boil, or it will harden, which would prevent it from mixing well with the eggs.

2. The dish should be concave, to allow the sauce to collect so that it can be served with a spoon.

3. The dish should be slightly warmed ; if it were cold, the porcelain would draw the heat out of the omelette, leaving too little to melt the *maître d'hôtel* sauce on which it rests.

II. Eggs in Gravy

I WAS one day on the road with two ladies, escorting them to *Melun*.

We started none too early, and arrived at *Montgeron* with an appetite that threatened destruction to anything and everything.

Vain threats : the inn at which we alighted, though fair enough outwardly, was stripped bare of all provisions ; three coaches and as many post-chaises had preceded us, devouring everything in their path, like the Egyptian locusts.

So said the cook.

Yet I saw a spit turning before the fire, laden with a very

II. Eggs in Gravy

comely gigot, on which the ladies from sheer force of habit bestowed their most coquettish glances.

Alas, those shafts were thrown away ! The leg of mutton belonged to three *Englishmen*, who had brought it with them, and sat cheerfully awaiting it over a bottle of champagne.

‘But at least,’ said I, half in anger and half in supplication, ‘at least you can broil these eggs for us in the gravy dripping from that meat ? With them, and a cup of good creamy coffee, we could be content.’ ‘Why, certainly,’ the host replied : ‘the gravy is our rightful property, and I ’ll do your business for you at once.’ Whereupon he began carefully breaking the eggs.

When I saw that he was fully occupied, I approached the fire, and, drawing a travelling-knife from my pocket, inflicted twelve deep wounds on the forbidden joint, enough to let forth its juices to the final drop.

At the same time I was careful to join in the business of cooking the eggs, for fear lest my ruse might be detected to our undoing ; and as soon as they were done, I took possession of the dish, and bore it off to the room which had been prepared for my companions and myself.

There we feasted off those eggs, and laughed uproariously to think we had in fact swallowed all the substance of the mutton, leaving our English friends to chew the worthless residue.

III. National Victory

DURING my sojourn in *New York*, I used sometimes to spend the evening in a species of café-tavern kept by one *Little*, where turtle soup was to be had of a morning, and at night all forms of refreshment usual in the *United States*.

Most often I took with me the *Vicomte de la Massue* and *Jean-Rodolphe Fehr*, late broker at *Marseilles*, both of whom were exiles like myself ; I would stand them a *Welsh rabbit*¹ washed down with ale or cider, and the evenings wore off very comfortably with talk of our misfortunes, pleasures, and future hopes.

At this tavern, then, I made the acquaintance of a Jamaica

¹ *Welsh rabbit* is the epigrammatical English name for a piece of cheese toasted on a slice of bread. The concoction is certainly less substantial than a rabbit ; but it causes a thirst, makes wine taste good, and is well enough for an informal dessert.

planter, *Mr. Wilkinson* by name, and also of a man who was doubtless a great friend of his, for he never left his side. This last individual was one of the most extraordinary men I have ever met ; his face was square, his eyes very bright, and he seemed to scrutinise everything with the minutest attention ; but he never spoke, and his features were as blank as those of a blind man. Only when he heard a sally or saw a joke, his face lighted up, and opening his mouth as wide as a trumpet-bell, he sent forth a prolonged noise resembling both laughter, as we understand the term, and the neighing sound called in English a horse-laugh ; after which everything returned to order, and he lapsed once more into his habitual silence ; as when a cloud is momentarily pierced by a sunbeam. *Mr. Wilkinson* himself seemed about fifty years of age, and had the manners and appearance of a gentleman.

The two *Englishmen* appeared to enjoy our society, and had already more than once, and with a very good grace, shared the frugal repast which I used to offer to my two friends, when one evening *Mr. Wilkinson* took me aside, and announced his intention of inviting the three of us to dinner.

I thanked him ; and deeming myself entitled to act in an affair in which I was evidently the principal, accepted on behalf of us all ; whereupon the party was fixed for three o'clock the day following.

The evening then proceeded as usual ; but as I was leaving, the waiter took me on one side, and informed me that the *Jamaicans* had ordered a first-rate dinner ; that they had paid particular attention to the liquid part of it, because, he said, they regarded their invitation as a challenge to the deepest drinker ; and that the man with the large mouth had declared that he had every hope of putting the *Frenchmen* under the table on his own account.

This news would have been enough to make me decline the proffered banquet, for all my life I have avoided orgies of the kind ; but the thing was impossible. The *Englishmen* would have filled the whole town with the news that we had been afraid to give battle, and that their very presence had been enough to make us turn tail ; and so, though fully aware of the danger, we obeyed the maxim of *Maréchal de Saxe* : the cork was drawn, and we prepared to drink the wine.

I was not without misgivings ; but at least it was not for myself that I was afraid.

III. National Victory

I knew that I was younger, bigger, and more vigorous than our amphitryons, and felt certain that my constitution, being undefiled by any previous Bacchic excess, would triumph over the two *Englishmen's*, which were doubtless rotten with spirituous indulgence.

Without doubt, alone against the four other combatants, I should have been proclaimed the victor ; but such a triumph, being purely personal, would have been singularly weakened by the fall of my compatriots, who would have been borne from the field in the hideous state inseparable from such disasters. I wished to spare them that indignity ; in a word, I desired a national and not an individual triumph. Accordingly, I summoned *Fehr* and *La Massue* to my apartment, and addressed a formal and severe harangue to them on the subject of my fears : I conjured them, whenever possible, to drink a little at a time, to empty their glasses surreptitiously while I engaged our adversaries' attention, and above all to eat slowly and nurse their appetite throughout the contest, because food mixed with wine tempers its ardour, and keeps it from rushing violently to the head ; finally, we proceeded to demolish between us a dish of bitter almonds, which I had heard possessed the property of counteracting the fumes of wine.

Thus morally and physically armed, we set forth for *Little's*, where we found our *Jamaicans* awaiting us ; and very soon afterwards dinner was served. It consisted of a huge piece of roast beef, a roast turkey, boiled vegetables, fresh cabbage salad, and a jam tart.

We drank in the French fashion, that is to say, the wine was served from the beginning : a very good claret, which was then much cheaper than in *France*, owing to the recent arrival of several shiploads, the last of which had sold badly.

Mr. Wilkinson played the host admirably, calling on us to fall to, and himself setting the example ; his friend seemed buried in his plate, spoke not a word, surveyed us with side-long glances, and laughed out of the corners of his mouth.

As for me, I was delighted with my two acolytes : *La Massue*, though endowed by nature with a mighty appetite, toyed with his food like any spoilt woman, while *Fehr* successively disposed of several glasses of wine, craftily tipping them into a beer-pot which stood at his end of the table. For my own part, I stood up fair and square to the two *Englishmen*, and as the meal proceeded, so did my confidence increase.

After the claret came port ; after the port Madeira, to which we confined ourselves for some time.

Dessert being now on the table, composed of butter, cheese, cocoanuts, and hickory nuts, the time was come for toasts ; and we drank copiously to the power of kings, the liberty of peoples, and the beauty of the ladies : we also moved, with *Mr. Wilkinson*, the health of his daughter *Mariah*, who, he assured us, was the prettiest girl in all *Jamaica*.

After the wine came spirits, that is to say, rum, brandy, whisky, and raspberry-brandy ; and I saw that we were in for a warm time. I feared those spirits, and eluded them by demanding punch ; and *Little* himself brought in an enormous bowl, doubtless ordered beforehand, which held enough for forty. We have no vessels of such capacity in *France*.

The sight of it brought back my courage ; I ate five or six pieces of fresh-buttered toast, and felt my strength revive within me. Then I took stock of my surroundings ; for I was beginning to feel some anxiety as to the end of the affair. My two friends seemed tolerably fresh, and were cracking hickory nuts between drinks. *Mr. Wilkinson's* countenance was a vivid crimson, his eyes troubled, and his air subdued ; while his friend kept silence, though his head smoked like a cauldron of boiling water, and his great mouth had assumed the likeness of a chicken's croup. I could see that the catastrophe was at hand.

And sure enough *Mr. Wilkinson*, pulling himself together with a sudden effort, leapt to his feet and in a loud voice intoned the national air of *Rule, Britannia* : but he could go no further ; his strength gave way, he sank back into his chair, and from thence slid under the table. His friend, seeing his condition, gave vent to one of his most shattering cachinnations, bent down to help him up, and collapsed alongside of him.

I can never hope to express the satisfaction I felt on this sudden favourable turn of events, nor the weight it lifted from my mind. I rang the bell at once ; *Little* came up, and when I had addressed him in the official phrase : ' See that these gentlemen are properly attended to,' we drank their health with him in a final glass of punch. Soon the waiter arrived, and with the help of his underlings took possession of our prostrate foes, and bore them out feet foremost,¹ *Mr. Wilkinson* still trying to sing *Rule, Britannia*, and his friend as motionless as a log.

¹ This phrase is used in English of persons either dead or drunk.

III. National Victory

Next morning the New York journals gave a substantially exact account of what had occurred, which was repeated in every paper throughout the Union ; and as they added that the *Englishmen* had taken to their beds as a result of the encounter, I went to see them. The friend I found completely stupefied under a violent attack of indigestion, and *Mr. Wilkinson* confined to his chair with gout, doubtless brought on by our Bacchic contest. He seemed sensible of the attention, and said to me, among other things : ‘ Oh, dear sir, you are very good company indeed, but too hard a drinker for us (*sic*).’



IV. Ablutions

I HAVE said elsewhere that the Roman vomitory was repugnant to the nicety of our own conventions ; but I am afraid this was a piece of rashness on my part, and that I must sing a palinode.

Let me explain :

Forty years ago, or thereabouts, there were a few people in the higher regions of society, nearly all of them ladies, who used to rinse their mouths out at the end of a meal.

To this end, immediately on leaving the table, they turned their backs on the company ; a servant handed them a cup of water, they took a mouthful, and promptly rejected the same into the saucer ; the servant carried off the whole paraphernalia, and the operation, or the details of its performance, passed almost unnoticed.

We have changed all that.

In houses where pride is taken in all the latest fashions, servants, at the end of dessert, distribute bowls of cold water among the guests, in each of which a goblet of hot water stands. Whereupon, in full view of one another, the guests plunge their

IV. Ablutions

fingers into the cold water, as if to wash them, fill their mouths with the hot, gargle noisily, and spit it out into the bowl or goblet.

I am not alone in lifting up my voice against this useless, indecent, and disgusting habit.

Useless ; because in the case of people who know how to eat, the mouth is clean at the end of a meal, having been cleansed either by fruit or the last glasses of wine drunk at dessert. As to their hands, they should not be put to any use which could soil them ; and besides, has not everyone a napkin to wipe them on ?

Indecent ; because it is a recognised law that ablution in whatever form should take place in the secret places set apart for the toilet.

And above all *disgusting* ; for the prettiest and freshest mouth loses its charms when it usurps the functions of the evaculatory organs : how then if the mouth is neither fresh nor pretty ? And what shall be said of monstrous vents disclosing pits that would seem bottomless, save for the emergence, here and there, of shapeless, time-corroded stumps ? *Proh pudor !*

To such a pass have we been brought by a pretentious affectation of cleanliness, foreign alike to our tastes and our conventions.

When once certain limits have been passed, there is no saying where we shall stop, and I know not what purification may next be foisted on us.

Ever since the official appearance of those new-fangled bowls, I have been miserable night and day. A second *Jeremiah*, I cry out against the vagaries of fashion ; and but too well informed by my travels, I never now enter a dining-room but I tremble lest my eyes should encounter the odious *chamber-pot*.¹

¹ It is common knowledge that there are, or were a few years back, dining-rooms in England where it was possible for a man to go his little rounds without leaving the room ; a curious facility indeed, but one which perhaps offered less inconvenience, in a land where the ladies withdraw as soon as the men begin to drink wine.

V. Mystification of the Professor, and Defeat of a General

A FEW years ago the papers announced the discovery of a new perfume, extracted from the *hemerocallis*, a bulbous plant having a very pleasant smell not unlike that of jasmine.

Now, I am by nature curious and much addicted to strolling ; and one day these two causes, acting in concert, propelled me as far as the *Faubourg Saint-Germain*, in quest of that perfume, that charmer of nostrils, as the Turkish phrase goes.

There I was welcomed as befits an amateur, and from the tabernacle of a well-stocked chemist's shop a little box wrapped in paper, and purporting to hold two ounces of the precious crystals, was brought forth for me ; which piece of politeness I reciprocated by leaving three francs behind me, in strict accordance with that law of compensation whereof *M. Azais* day by day enlarges the sphere and principles.

One of common clay would then and there have unwrapped, opened, sniffed, and smelt ; but such is not the professorial way. Here, as it seemed to me, was a case calling for withdrawal : therefore I bent my official footsteps homeward, and ere long, comfortably ensconced in my sofa, prepared to experience a new sensation.

I took the fragrant box from my pocket, and eased it of the wrappings in which it still was swathed : three separate pamphlets I removed, all celebrating *hemerocallis*, its natural history, growth, and flower, and the bliss to be drawn from its perfume, were that perfume concentrated in pastilles or merged in toilet preparations, or whether it came to table dissolved in alcoholic liquors or closely mingled with ice-cream. Most carefully I perused each several account, first, to indemnify myself as fully as might be in respect of the compensation above referred to, and secondly, to pave the way for a right appreciation of this new treasure extracted from the vegetable realm.

Then, and with due reverence, I opened the box, conceiving it to be brimful of pastilles. But oh surprise ! oh disillusion ! At the top I found a second edition of the three pamphlets I

V. *Defeat of a General*

had just devoured, and beneath them, as it were an afterthought, perhaps two dozen of the trochisks in pursuit of which I had ventured down the noble Faubourg.

Before all else, I smelled ; and in deference to truth I must confess I found those pastilles very fragrant ; which, however, did but make me the more bitterly regret that, contrary to outward seeming, they were so few in number ; and truly, the more I thought about it, the deeper was my mystification.

I rose up, then, intending to return the box to its author, and to claim my money back ; but the movement brought me face to face with my grey hairs in a glass : how could I do otherwise than laugh at my hot-headedness, and sit down again, bottling my resentment ? All must agree that it has lasted well.

I was held back, too, by a very special consideration ; for here was an affair of chemists, and not four days had passed since I had been a witness of the extreme imperturbability of that most respectable brotherhood.

Still another anecdote, gentle reader. I am in the mood for telling tales to-day (June 17th, 1825) ; God grant it be not a public calamity !

Well, then, I had occasion to call one morning on my friend and fellow-townsmen, *General Bouvier des Éclats*.

I found him striding up and down his room, in a state of violent agitation, with a crumpled manuscript in his hands which I took to be a piece of verse.

‘Look at this,’ he said, giving the paper to me, ‘and tell me what you think of it ; you are a good judge of such things.’

I took it, and running my eye over it, found to my surprise that it was a bill for medicine supplied ; so that I was being consulted pharmaconomically, and not as a poet after all.

‘Come, come, my friend,’ I said, returning his property to him, ‘you know the ways of the body you have set in motion ; true, the limits may have been a little overstepped, but what have you a frogged coat, three orders, and a cockade in your hat for ? Those are three aggravating circumstances, and you can’t expect to be let off lightly.’ ‘Be quiet,’ he said gruffly, ‘this is not a laughing matter at all. However, you will see my tormentor for yourself ; I have sent for him, and he is on his way. I rely on your support, now.’

The words were hardly out of his mouth when the door opened, and there entered a well-dressed man of about fifty-five years old ; he was tall and very dignified, and the severe cast

of his features was unrelieved save for a faintly sardonical upward tilt of the corners of his mouth.

He walked across the room to the fireplace, and refused to be seated ; and I was privileged to listen to the following dialogue, which I faithfully committed to memory :

THE GENERAL : Sir, the bill you have sent in is a true apothecary's bill, and . . .

THE SINISTER MAN : Sir, I am no apothecary.

THE GENERAL : Pray, what are you then, sir ?

THE SINISTER MAN : Sir, I am a chemist.

THE GENERAL : Very well, sir chemist, your boy has doubtless told you that . . .

THE SINISTER MAN : Sir, I have no boy.

THE GENERAL : Who was that young man, then ?

THE SINISTER MAN : Sir, he is my pupil.

THE GENERAL : What I wished to tell you, sir, was that your drugs . . .

THE SINISTER MAN : Sir, I do not sell drugs.

THE GENERAL : What do you sell then, sir ?

THE SINISTER MAN : Sir, I sell medicine.

There the discussion ended. The General, ashamed of having uttered so many solecisms, and of being so backward in his acquaintance with the pharmaceutical tongue, lost his head, forgot what he had intended to say, and paid every penny that was demanded of him.

VI. The Savoury Eel

THERE lived in *Paris*, in the *rue de la Chaussée-d'Antin*, an individual named *Briguet*, who had risen from a coachman to be a horse-dealer, and had amassed a small fortune in the process.

Born at *Talissieu*, and being resolved to end his days there, he took to wife a woman of modest means who had formerly been cook at *Mlle Chevenin's* establishment, once known to all *Paris* as the *As de Pique*.

As soon as an opportunity came his way of acquiring a small property in his native village, he took advantage of it, and settled down there with his spouse in the latter part of the year 1791.

In those days it was usual for all the parish priests within a

VI. *The Savoury Eel*

diocese to forgather once a month, each playing host in turn, for the purpose of discussing ecclesiastical affairs. The discussion took place after a celebration of High Mass, and was followed by a dinner.

The whole affair was known as *the conference* ; and the priest at whose house it was due to be held always made preparations beforehand to entertain his brethren well and worthily.

Now when it was the turn of the curé of *Talissieu*, it so happened that one of his flock had presented him with a superb eel, more than three feet long, taken from the limpid waters of *Serans*.

Enraptured at finding himself the possessor of so noble a fish, the good pastor was afraid lest his cook might be unable to realise the high hopes he entertained of it ; he therefore sought out *Mme Briguet*, and paying due homage to her superior accomplishments, begged her to set her seal upon a dish worthy of an archbishop, and which would do the greatest honour to his dinner.

She, like a docile member of his flock, raised no objection, and was the readier to comply with his request (she said), in that there was still in her possession a little box containing certain rare condiments which she had used in the employ of her former mistress.

The eel, then, was studiously confectioned, and served with due distinction. Shapely it was, and its smell an enchantment ; and when it was tasted, words could not be found to express its praise ; and so it disappeared, body and sauce, down to the last particle.

But it came to pass that at dessert the reverend men were stirred in a most unwonted fashion, and that, by reason of the unflinching influence of physical over moral, their talk turned to naughtiness.

Here one told tales of his college escapades, there another breathed the breath of scandal into his neighbour's ear ; in a word, the conversation was entirely given over to the sweetest of the deadly sins ; and, what was specially remarkable, they were all blissfully unconscious of their wickedness, so covertly the devil went about his work.

They separated late, and my secret Memoirs go no further on the subject of that day. But at the next conference, when the same guests came face to face again, they were ashamed of the things which they had said, and seeking an excuse for that which they reproached themselves with, at last laid all to the account of the dish of eel ; so that, while freely confessing its

delicacy, they none the less agreed that it would be unwise to put *Mme Brigueur's* cunning to a second test.

I have inquired in vain after the exact nature of the condiment that worked such wonders, and all the more eagerly because none complained of its being dangerous or corrosive.

The artist herself pleaded guilty to a liberally pimentoed crayfish sauce ; but I hold for certain that she was not telling me the whole truth.



VII. The Asparagus

THERE came one on a day to *Monseigneur Cortois de Quinsey*, Bishop of *Belley*, saying that an asparagus of marvellous girth might be seen emerging from a certain bed in his kitchen garden.

Forthwith the entire household sallied out to verify the fact ; for in bishops' palaces, no less than elsewhere, men are delighted to have something to do.

The news was found to be neither false nor exaggerated. The plant had broken through the earth's crust, and already showed above ground ; the head of it was rounded, lustrous, and diapered, and gave promise of a column not to be encircled by the widest hand.

Great was the rejoicing at the sight of this horticultural phenomenon ; all agreed that the right of severing it from its root pertained to *Monseigneur* alone, and the local cutler was enjoined to make forthwith a very special knife for that exalted function.

In the days that followed, the asparagus but grew in grace and beauty ; its progress was slow, but never ceased ; and soon the white part could be seen, where the esculent properties of the vegetable terminate.

The harvest-time being thus evidently proclaimed, a good dinner was eaten by way of preparation, and the great work adjourned until the return from the post-prandial walk.

Then *Monseigneur* advanced, armed with the blade of office, and, bending down with dignity, set about severing the proud plant from its stem, while the whole episcopal court chafed to examine its fibres and contexture.

But oh, surprise ! Oh, sorrow and dismay ! The prelate rose up empty-handed. . . . The asparagus was made of wood.

The joke, which perhaps went a little far, was the invention of *Canon Rosset*, a native of *Saint-Claude*, who had exquisite skill as a turner, and painted admirably also.

He had fashioned the false plant to perfection, interred it secretly, and raised it little by little every day, in counterfeit of natural growth.

Monseigneur scarce knew how it became him to take the mystification (for it was no less) ; but perceiving symptoms of hilarity already on the features of all present, he smiled ; and that smile was followed by a general explosion of Homeric laughter : the body of offence was borne away, and the offender left unrebuked ; and for that one evening at least, the asparagus-statue was granted the honour of exhibition.

VIII. The Trap

THE *Chevalier de Langeac* inherited a pretty fortune, which rapidly dispersed by way of the usual outlets that beset a rich young man of fashion.

He collected the wreckage, and betook himself to *Lyons*, where, with the help of a small government pension, he led an agreeable life in the best society ; for experience had taught him the value of moderation.

Though still gallant, he had by now retired from active service among the ladies ; he was always ready to play at cards with them, being equally proficient in all the usual games ; but

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VIII. The Trap

defended his purse against them with all the coolness of one who has definitely renounced their favours.

Gourmandism gained what his other inclinations lost : he may be said to have made it his profession ; and possessing many excellent qualities besides, he was continually overwhelmed with invitations.

Lyons is a city of good cheer ; it equally abounds, through its situation, with *Bordeaux*, *Hermitage*, and *Burgundy* wines ; excellent game flourishes in the surrounding hills ; the two lakes of *Geneva* and *Le Bourget* contain the best fish in the world, and amateurs swoon at the sight of *Bresse* fowls, of which *Lyons* is the principal market.

The *Chevalier de Langeac*, then, was always sure of a place at the best tables in the town ; but of them all he loved best that of *M. A . . .*, a wealthy banker and distinguished amateur. This partiality the *Chevalier* put down to an old bond of friendship contracted between them in their school-days. Cynics (for there are such everywhere) attributed it to the fact that *M. A . . .*'s kitchen was presided over by the ablest pupil of *Ramier*, a notable cook who flourished in those far-off days.

Be that as it may, towards the end of the winter of 1780 the *Chevalier de Langeac* received a letter from *M. A . . .*, inviting him to supper ten days from thence (for there were still suppers then) ; and it is written in my secret *Memoirs* that he trembled all over with delight, taking the long notice for an augury of solemn doings and festivities of the highest order.

On the day and at the hour fixed upon, he made his appearance, and found the guests already assembled, to the number of ten, all friends of joy and good cheer ; the word *gastronome* had not at that time been borrowed from the Greek, or at least was not in general use as it is to-day.

Soon a substantial meal was served, comprising, among other things, a huge roast sirloin, a richly garnished chicken fricassee, a piece of veal that held out golden promises, and a very comely stuffed carp.

All this was well and good, but scarcely answered, in the *Chevalier's* eyes, to the hopes roused in him by his ultradecadary invitation.

He was struck, moreover, by another singularity : the guests, all men of proved appetite, either ate not at all or hardly touched the fare ; one was suffering from a headache, another from a

chill, a third had dined late, and so with all the rest. The Chevalier marvelled at the strange chance which brought so many anti-convivial dispositions together on a single evening, and, holding himself in duty bound to act on behalf of all the invalids, opened the attack manfully, plied his knife with right precision, and brought great powers of intussusception into play.

The second course was built on foundations no less solid : a vast Crémieu turkey faced a very seemly pike *au bleu*, with six side-dishes drawn up on either flank, among which macaroni cheese was generously conspicuous.

At these apparitions the Chevalier felt his waning powers revive within him, while his fellow-guests seemed like men about to breathe their last. Exalted by a change of wines, he triumphed over their impotence, and drank their health in a long succession of bumpers, which also served to wash down a plentiful helping of pike and the parson's nose of the turkey.

The side-dishes in turn received a proper welcome, and so he pursued his career gloriously and without stint, leaving room for no more dessert than a piece of cheese and a small glass of Madeira ; for sweets had never a place in the Chevalier's budget.

We have seen how the evening had already provided him with two surprises, first the too solid nature of the fare, and then the indisposition of all the guests but himself ; a third, of a very different order, awaited him.

For instead of bringing in dessert, the servants cleared everything away from the table, linen as well as plate, laid fresh covers for the guests, and deposited in front of them four new entrées, the smell of which ascended to the heavens.

They were, sweetbreads with crayfish sauce, soft roes truffled, a stuffed and basted pike, and partridge-wings in chestnut cream.

Like *Ariosto's* old magician, who, having the fair *Armida* in his power, strove impotently to dishonour her, the Chevalier was utterly baffled at the sight of so many good things which he could no longer enjoy ; and he began to suspect his host's intentions.

The other guests, meanwhile, all felt their strength revive : appetite returned, headaches fled away, and each mouth seemed to grow ironically wider ; and now it was their turn to drink to the Chevalier, whose powers were exhausted.

However, he was not to be put out of countenance, and seemed ready to bear up against the storm ; but at the third

VIII. *The Trap*

mouthful nature rebelled, and his stomach threatened to play him false. He was forced against his will into inactivity, and proceeded, in the musical phrase, to beat time.

Judge of his feelings when a third change was rung, and he saw snipe brought in by dozens, larded snow-white and stretched on official toast, together with a pheasant from the banks of the *Seine* (in those days a rare bird), a fresh tunny, and pastry and side-dishes of an elegance he had never seen surpassed !

For a few moments he thought hard, and was on the point of keeping his seat, continuing the uneven struggle, and facing death on the field of battle. Such, right or wrong, was his first proud impulse : but soon egoism came to his aid, and brought him to a more moderate way of thinking.

He reflected that in such a case prudence would not be cowardice ; that death by indigestion always courts ridicule, and that doubtless the future held many compensations for the present disappointment : he therefore hesitated no longer, but, throwing down his napkin : ' Sir,' said he to the banker, ' no gentleman thus exposes his friends ; you have betrayed me, and I hope I may never set eyes on you again.' He said, and disappeared.

His departure occasioned no great stir ; it announced the success of a plot that had been laid, to confront him with a good meal which he should be unable to profit by ; and everyone was in the secret.

But the Chevalier sulked longer than might have been expected ; much tact was needed to appease his wrath ; in the end, however, he returned with the beccaficos, and had forgotten the affair by the time truffles were in again.



IX. The Turbot

THERE was a day when Discord would have rent asunder a pair than which the capital holds none more mutually devoted. To be exact, it was Sunday, the Sabbath Day ; the trouble concerned the cooking of a turbot ; it came about in a country place, and that place was *Villecrêne*.

The fish, which seemed to have been drawn from the depths for some more glorious fate, was to be served up the day following at a gathering of good friends of whose number I was one ; it was fresh and plump, and as lustrous as could be desired ; but its proportions so far outdistanced all available vessels, that there was no saying how it should be cooked.

‘Very well,’ said the husband ; ‘we will cut it in two.’
‘Would you dare dishonour the poor creature so ?’ replied the wife. ‘Needs must, my dear, for there’s no other way. Come, send for the chopper, and the thing will be done in no time.’
‘Wait a little, my friend, we have still plenty of time ; and besides, you know our cousin is coming ; he is a Professor, and I am certain he will be able to help us out of the difficulty.’

IX. The Turbot

'A Professor . . . help us out of the difficulty. . . . Bah !'
And it is faithfully related that he who spoke thus seemed to put little trust in the Professor ; and yet I was that Professor !
Schwernoth !

The difficulty was probably on the point of being ended in the Alexandrine way, when I arrived at the charge, nose to windward, and with the appetite that always comes at the end of a journey, at seven in the evening, when the smell of a good dinner greets the nostrils and solicits taste.

Upon entering, I vainly sought to exchange the usual compliments ; there was no reply, for the simple reason that no one heard my greeting. But soon the all-absorbing question was propounded to me in a duet ; at the end of which the two performers fell dumb in concert, my fair cousin watching me with eyes that seemed to say, 'I am full of hope,' her spouse plainly signifying by his scornful, supercilious air that he was convinced beforehand of my failure, while his left hand rested on the formidable chopper, which had been brought at his behest.

Both expressions gave place to one of lively curiosity, when in grave and oracular tones I pronounced these solemn words :
'The turbot will remain whole, even to the moment of its official presentation.'

Already I was certain of success, for in the last resort I should have proposed baking it in the oven ; but as that method is not without difficulties, I held my peace meantime, and silently repaired to the kitchen, myself at the head of the procession, my two cousins serving as acolytes, the servants playing the part of the faithful, and the cook *in flocchi* bringing up the rear.

The first two rooms held nothing that found favour in my sight ; but when I came to the scullery, a copper met my gaze, small, but well bedded in its furnace ; at once I saw its use and application, and, turning to my train : 'Be at ease,' I cried, with the faith that moves mountains : 'the turbot will be cooked whole, it will be cooked by steam, it is going to be cooked here and now.'

And straightway, although it was already dinner-time, I set everyone to work. While some lit the furnace fire, I made a sort of hurdle, of the exact size of the giant fish, from a fifty-bottle pannier. Upon the hurdle I caused a layer of roots and savoury herbs to be spread, on which the fish was laid, after having been well scoured, dried, and sufficiently salted. A

second layer of the same seasoning was spread on top of it. Then the hurdle with its load was placed over the copper, which had been half-filled with water ; and the whole was covered with a small wash-tub, round which dry sand was heaped, to keep the steam from too easily escaping. Soon the water was aboil ; and ere long steam filled all the interior of the wash-tub, which was removed at the end of half an hour, when the hurdle was lifted from the copper with the turbot done to a turn, very white and fair to look upon.

The operation being complete, we ran to table, with appetites whetted by delay, travail, and success, so that much time passed ere we arrived at the happy moment, always mentioned by *Homer*, when abundance and variety of fare had driven forth hunger.

The following day, at dinner, the turbot was served up before the honourable guests assembled, and all were loud in admiration of its fair appearance. Thereupon the master of the house himself described by what unhopèd-for means it had been cooked ; and I was praised not only for the timeliness of my invention, but for its effects also ; for after the most careful degustation, it was unanimously resolved that the fish, so prepared, was incomparably better than if it had been cooked in a fish-kettle.

The verdict astonished no one, since, not having passed through boiling water, it had lost none of its prime elements, but, on the contrary, had absorbed all the flavour of the seasoning.

While my ears tingled with the compliments poured into them from all sides, my eyes sought others more sincere in the visible post-mortem verdict of the guests ; and I perceived, with secret satisfaction, that *General Labassée* was so full of contentment that he smiled after every mouthful ; that the curé sat entranced, with neck outstretched and eyes glued to the ceiling ; and that of two academicians who were of our company, both good gourmands and men of understanding, one, *M. Auger*, showed the sparkling eyes and radiant features of an applauded author, while *M. Villemain*, the other, sat with head bent forward and chin to the west, like a man that listens eagerly.

All which is worth bearing in mind, for there are few country houses that do not contain everything needed to construct the apparatus of which I made use on this occasion, and to which

IX. *The Turbot*

recourse can be had whenever it is desired to cook some substance which comes unexpectedly to hand and exceeds ordinary dimensions.

Yet my readers would never have heard of the great adventure had it not seemed to me to be bound to lead to results of more general utility.

For, as everyone knows who understands its nature and effects, steam has a temperature equal to that of the liquid from which it rises ; it can even be raised several degrees above that point by a slight concentration, and it continues to accumulate so long as it finds no issue.

From this it follows that, in similar circumstances, simply by increasing the capacity of the wash-tub used as a cover in my experiment—for example, by substituting for it an empty cask of large dimensions—it would be possible to cook by steam, both promptly and with a minimum of trouble, several bushels of potatoes, roots of every kind, and in fact whatever could be heaped on the hurdle and covered by the cask, whether intended as food for man or beast : and the whole would cook in a sixth part of the time, and with a sixth part of the fuel required to bring a cauldron of twenty gallons of water to the boil.

I hold that this simple device can be used with advantage in any house containing a copper, be it in town or country ; and for that reason I have described it in detail, so that all who choose may learn and profit by it.

I further hold that not nearly enough use is made of steam-power for household purposes, and I sincerely hope a day will come when the bulletin of the Encouragement Society will inform the agricultural world of my ulterior concern with it.

P.S.—One day, at a professorial committee meeting, at No. 14 *rue de la Paix*, I narrated the true history of the steamed turbot. When I had finished, my left-hand neighbour turned to me : ‘ Was I not there myself ? ’ said he reproachfully ; ‘ and did I not at the time join my voice to the general verdict of approval ? ’

‘ Why, certainly, ’ I replied, ‘ you were there, next to the curé, and you played your part in a manner quite above reproach ; do not think that . . . ’

The plaintiff was *M. Lorrain*, a notably papillous degustator, and a financier both amiable and wise, who has made fast in port the more coolly to gauge the effects of the storm, and is thus worthy in more respects than one of a first-class nomination.

X. Three Strengthening Prescriptions, devised
by the Professor to meet the case of
Meditation XXV

A

TAKE six large onions, three carrots, and a handful of parsley ; chop small, place over the fire in a casserole with a piece of fresh butter, and brown.

When the mixture is ready, add six ounces of sugar-candy, twenty grains of powdered amber, a piece of toast, and three bottles of water ; let boil for three-quarters of an hour, adding fresh water to replace what is lost in the boiling, so that the volume of liquid constantly remains the same.

Meanwhile, pluck and clean an old cock, and pound it in a mortar, flesh and bone, with an iron pestle ; mince up also two pounds of the best beef.

This done, mix the two kinds of meat together, adding a sufficient quantity of salt and pepper. Place in a casserole, on a bright fire, and heat well, throwing in fresh butter from time to time, so as to fry the mixture well without allowing it to bind.

When it is browned, that is to say, as soon as the osmazome is roasted, strain the broth in the first casserole. Pour into the second, little by little ; when it is all poured in, let boil merrily for three-quarters of an hour, taking care to add enough hot water when necessary to keep up the level of the liquid.

At the end of that time the operation is complete, and you have a draught of infallible efficacy, provided that the patient's stomach, despite his weakness due to one or other of the causes indicated, is still in good working order.

The method of administering is : on the first day, a cupful every three hours, until the patient goes to sleep at night ; on each succeeding day, one large cupful in the morning, and the same at night, until the three bottles are exhausted. If the patient is put on a light but nutritious diet, such as leg of chicken, fish, sweet fruit, jam, etc., it will rarely be found necessary to repeat the treatment. On the fourth day he will

X. Three Strengthening Prescriptions

be able to resume his ordinary occupations, and must make up his mind to be wiser for the future, *if possible*.

If the amber and sugar-candy are left out, a very savoury soup is obtained by this process, a soup worthy to grace a dinner of connoisseurs.

If four old partridges are substituted for the old cock, and for the beef an equal quantity of leg of mutton, the preparation will be neither less effective nor less agreeable.

The plan of mincing the meat and frying it before adding the liquid can be safely recommended for all occasions when time is of importance. It is based on the fact that meat so treated reaches a much higher degree of heat than when it is placed in water ; and it may therefore be employed whenever rich soup is required to be made, without the necessity of waiting five or six hours for it, as often happens, especially in the country. Nor let such as have recourse to this method fail to glorify the Professor.

B

It is well for all to know that though amber, considered as a perfume, may be bad for the profane whose nerves are delicate, taken internally it is a sovereign and exhilarating tonic ; our forefathers used it freely in their cooking, and were never any the worse for it.

I have been told that *Maréchal de Richelieu*, of glorious memory, was much addicted to amber lozenges ; and for myself, on days when age seems more than ordinarily burdensome, when thought is a labour and some unknown force beleaguers all the senses, I put into a cup of strong chocolate as much amber, pounded with sugar, as would make a lump the size of a bean, and always find that it works wonders. By means of this tonic, the action of life is made easy, and thought set free ; nor do I experience the insomnia which would infallibly follow a cup of coffee taken with the intention of producing the same effect.

C

Prescription A is intended for robust constitutions, strong characters, and for those, in general, whose breakdown is due to excess of action.

I once had occasion to concoct another, far pleasanter to the taste and milder in its effects, which I reserve for weak constitu-

tions, less decided characters—for those, in a word, who break down easily ; it is as follows :

Take a knuckle of veal of not less than two pounds' weight, split in four lengthwise, flesh and bone, and fry together with four sliced onions and a handful of water-cress ; when it is nearly done, pour on three bottles of water and boil for two hours, not forgetting to replenish what is lost by evaporation, when you will have ready an excellent veal broth ; add a sufficient quantity of pepper and salt.

Pound up, separately, three old pigeons and twenty-five live crayfish ; mix and fry as described in A, and when you see that the heat has thoroughly penetrated the mixture, and that it is ready to burn, pour on the veal broth and stoke the fire well for one hour. Then strain the broth so enriched, when it may be taken by the patient morning and evening, or preferably in the morning only, two hours before luncheon. It also makes a delicious soup for ordinary purposes.

I was induced to evolve this last prescription by a pair of literary folk, who, seeing me in a very positive mood, put their trust in me, and, as they said, had recourse to my lights.

They underwent the treatment, and had no reason to repent of their choice. The poet, who before had been elegiac, turned romantic ; the lady, who had only a very gloomy novel to her credit, with a miserable ending, wrote another and much better one, which ended with an indisputably happy marriage. Clearly, in each case, there was exaltation of power, and I believe, in all conscience, I may claim a little of the glory.



XI. The Bresse Chicken

ON one of the early days of January in this present year, 1825, a young married couple, *Mme* and *M. de Versy* by name, were guests at a *full-dress* oyster breakfast ; my readers will know what that means.

Such meals are charming, not only on account of the tempting dishes they are composed of, but also because of the gaiety which usually distinguishes them ; they have one disadvantage, however, namely, that they upset the rest of the day's arrangements. And so it was on the present occasion. When dinner-time arrived, the pair took their places at table ; but it was mere formality ; *Madame* swallowed a mouthful of soup, *Monsieur* drank a glass of wine and water ; some friends came in, a game of whist was played, the evening drew to a close, and one bed received the twain.

About two o'clock in the morning, *M. de Versy* awoke ; he was restless ; he yawned ; he tossed and turned so, that his wife grew alarmed, and asked him, was he unwell ? ' No, my dear, but I seem to be hungry ; I was dreaming of that beautiful

Bresse chicken we so shamefully neglected at dinner.' 'My dear, to confess the truth, I am as hungry as you are, and if you have been dreaming of that chicken, why, it must be sent for and eaten.' 'Oh nonsense! The whole house is asleep, and to-morrow we shall be a laughing-stock.' 'If the whole house is asleep, the whole house shall wake up, and we shall not be laughed at, for the simple reason that no one will know about it. And besides, who knows if between now and to-morrow one of us may not starve to death? I don't intend running the risk. I am going to ring for *Justine*.'

No sooner said than done; and the poor girl, who had supped well and was sleeping as only those can sleep who are nineteen years old and untroubled by love,¹ was rudely awakened.

She arrived all untidy, with half-closed eyes, and sat down still yawning and stretching her arms.

But this had been an easy task; it still remained to rouse the cook, and there was an affair indeed. For she was a blue ribbon, and crusty in proportion; she grunted, neighed, growled, snorted, and roared; in the end, however, she got out of bed, and set her vast circumference in motion.

Meanwhile *Mme de Versy* had slipped into a camisole, and her husband also made himself presentable. *Justine* spread a cloth upon the bed, and brought in the indispensable adjuncts to an improvised feast.

And when all was ready, the chicken appeared, to be rent asunder on the instant and remorselessly devoured.

Following this first exploit, husband and wife shared a plump Saint-Germain pear, and ate some orange marmalade.

In the *entr'actes* they drained a bottle of Graves wine to the dregs, and repeatedly declared, with variations, that never had they made a more delightful meal.

However, the meal came to an end, as all things must in this world below; *Justine* cleared away the incriminating evidence, and went back to bed; and the conjugal curtain once more hid the festive pair.

Next morning, *Mme de Versy* ran to her friend, *Mme de Franval*, and recounted all that had passed in the night; and it is to that lady's indiscretion that the public owes the present revelation.

She invariably insists that *Mme de Versy*, when she came to the end of her narration, coughed twice and very positively blushed.

¹ *A pierna tendida.* (Sp.)

XII. Pheasant

XII. Pheasant

THE pheasant is an enigma, the word whereof is revealed to none but the initiate ; they alone can savour it in all its excellence.

Every substance has its esculent apogee : some attain it before they reach their full development, as capers, asparagus, grey partridges, spoon-fed pigeons, etc. ; some at the exact moment of their natural prime, as melons, most kinds of fruit, mutton, beef, venison, and red partridges ; and some when they begin to decompose, as medlars, woodcock, and above all, pheasant.

This last bird, eaten within three days of its death, has an undistinguished taste. It is then neither so delicate as a farm-yard fowl, nor so fragrant as a quail.

Cooked at the right stage, its flesh is tender, sublime, and exquisitely savoury, sharing the best qualities of game and venison.

That desirable stage is reached as soon as the pheasant begins to decompose ; only then does its fragrance develop, being associated with an oil which, to be formed, requires a period of fermentation, like the oil of coffee, which is only obtained by the application of heat.

The moment is made manifest to the senses of the profane by a faint odour, and a change in the colour of the belly of the bird ; but the inspired few divine it by an instinct which moves them on divers occasions, as, for example, when it informs a skilled cook, so that at a glance he decides to take a fowl from the spit or to leave it for a few more turns.

As soon as the pheasant has reached this stage, and no sooner, it is plucked, and carefully smeared over with the freshest and most concentrated lard.

Not for nothing do we say that the bird must not be plucked too soon ; careful investigations show that those kept in feather are much more fragrant than those that have been long kept bare, whether because contact with the air neutralises some portion of the flavour, or because a part of the natural juices which nourish the feathers is reabsorbed, and helps to enrich the flesh.

The bird, being plucked and larded, is now ready to be stuffed ; and this is done as follows :

Have ready a brace of woodcock ; bone and draw them, laying the liver and entrails on one side.

Take the flesh, and mince up with steamed ox-marrow, a little grated bacon, pepper, salt, savoury herbs, and a sufficient quantity of good truffles to produce enough stuffing to fill the interior of the bird.

You will be careful to insert the stuffing in such a way that none can escape : a difficult business sometimes, when the bird is far gone. There are various methods, however, one of which is, to tie a crust of bread over the opening with a piece of thread, so that it acts as a stopper.

Next cut a slice of bread two inches wider all round than the pheasant laid lengthwise ; take the woodcock-liver and entrails, and pound with two large truffles, an anchovy, a little lard, and fresh butter. Spread this paste evenly over the bread, and place it beneath the pheasant prepared as above, so that it may be thoroughly soaked with all the juices which exude from the bird in the roasting.

When the pheasant is cooked, serve it up gracefully reclining on its bed of toast ; surround it with bitter oranges, and have no fear of the result.

This most savoury dish is best washed down with vintage Burgundy ; I evolved this truth from a series of observations that cost me more trouble than a table of logarithms.

A pheasant thus garnished were a dish worthy to be set before angels, if they still walked on earth, as in the days of *Lot*.

Nay, what am I saying ? The thing has been done. A stuffed pheasant was contrived before my very eyes by the good chef *Picard*, at the *Château de la Grange*, where dwells my charming friend *Mme de Ville-Plaine*, and borne to table by her steward *Louis*, stepping gravely and with dignity. It was as closely scrutinised as one of *Mme Herbault's* hats ; it was very studiously savoured ; and throughout this learned work the eyes of the ladies shone like stars, their lips gleamed with the lustre of coral, and their faces were upturned in ecstasy. (See *Gastronomical Tests*.)

I have done more : I have offered such a dish to a company of Justices of the Supreme Court, who know well when to lay aside the senatorial toga, and to whom I clearly proved that good cheer is nature's compensation for the cares of the bench. And

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after close examination, the President pronounced in a grave voice the word *Excellent* ! All heads bowed in token of assent, and the verdict was unanimous.

I had observed, during the period of deliberation, that the noses of those venerable men were astir with very definite olfactory twitchings, that their brows shone with calm serenity, and that there was that playing about the corners of each mouth which almost might have been a smile.

For the rest, these marvellous effects are in the nature of things. For a pheasant cooked in accordance with the foregoing receipt is impregnated from without by the savoury juices of the roasting lard, while from within it absorbs the fragrant gases given off by the woodcock and truffles ; the toast meanwhile, richly garnished already, is additionally charged with the three varieties of gravy which exude from the roasting bird.

And so, of all the good things thus brought together, not one atom escapes appreciation ; and such is the virtue of this dish, that I hold it worthy of tables the most august.

Parve, nec invideo, sine me liber ibis in aulam.

XIII. Gastronomical Industry of the Émigrés

In France, methinks, there's ne'er a wench
But cooks as soon as she speaks French.

BELLE ARSÈNE, ACT III.

IN an earlier chapter I revealed what great advantages *France* derived from gourmandism in the peculiar circumstances of 1815. The same national propensity proved no less useful to the *émigrés* ; and those among them who owned a talent for the alimentary art found it a very valuable staff to lean upon.

While I was in *Boston*, I taught the restaurateur *Jullien*¹ the secret of broiling eggs with cheese. The dish was new to the *Americans*, and became so much the rage that *Jullien*, in recognition of his indebtedness to me, sent me, in *New York*, the back of one of those delicious little roe-deer that are shot in *Canada* in the winter months, the which was voted excellent by the chosen company I convened for the occasion.

¹ *Jullien* was in a prosperous way in 1794. He was an able fellow, and had been cook, so he told me, to the *Archbishop of Bordeaux*. If God spared him, he must have amassed a pretty fortune.

Captain Collet was another who grew rich in *New York* in 1794 and 1795, on the proceeds of the ices which he made for the folk of that mercantile community. Women in particular found so novel a taste irresistible, and nothing could be more amusing than the little grimaces they made when eating them. They were utterly at a loss to conceive how a substance could be kept so cold in a temperature of ninety degrees.

I recollect meeting a Breton gentleman in *Cologne*, who was very comfortably settled as host of an inn ; and I could go on multiplying examples of the kind indefinitely ; but I shall rather relate, as being perhaps the most singular of all, the story of a *Frenchman* who made his fortune in *London* through his skill in mixing salad.

He was a *Limousin*, and his name, unless my memory is at fault, was *d'Albignac* or *d'Aubignac*.

One day, despite his straitened circumstances, he dined in one of the most celebrated *London* taverns ; for he was among those who go upon the system that a man can dine well off a single dish, provided that dish be an excellent one.

He was finishing a plate of succulent roast beef, then, when one of a party of young men of quality (*dandies*), who were dining at a neighbouring table, rose from his place, came up to him, and very politely addressed him as follows : '*Monsieur le Français*, your countrymen are said to excel in the art of salad-making ; would you do my friends and myself the favour of mixing one for us ?'

D'Albignac consented, after a little hesitation, called for what he thought necessary for the production of an impromptu masterpiece, and gave his best attention to the work ; and by good luck his efforts were crowned with success.

While measuring out the doses, he frankly answered the questions that were put to him about his situation ; he explained that he was in exile, and confessed, not without blushing, that he was in receipt of help from the English government : a circumstance which doubtless authorised one of the young men to slip a five-pound note into his hand, which, after a slight show of resistance, he accepted.

He left his address with them ; and was but mildly surprised when a few days later he received a letter begging him, in the warmest terms, to visit one of the finest mansions in *Grosvenor Square*, and mix a salad there.

D'Albignac, now beginning to foresee enduring advantages,

XIII. *Gastronomical Industry of the Émigrés*

hesitated not an instant before accepting, and arrived punctually at his destination, armed with a number of new seasonings which he judged likely to invest his work with a higher degree of perfection.

He had had time to prepare for this his second enterprise ; accordingly, his efforts were again successful, and on this occasion he received so generous a testimonial that in his own interest he could not have refused it.

The young men for whom he had first performed, it is to be presumed, had freely extolled the virtues of the salad he had seasoned for them. The second company were still louder in their approval, so that *d'Albignac's* fame spread apace ; he became known as the *fashionable salad-maker*, and in a land ever thirsty after novelties, all the most elegant society in the capital of the three kingdoms was soon dying for a salad of the French gentleman's making. *I die for it* is the time-honoured expression :

Pales the hot ardour of a *nun's* desire
Before an *Englishwoman's* greedy fire.

D'Albignac, like a wise man, profited by the infatuation of which he became the object ; he soon had a carriage to convey him more quickly to the divers scenes of his activities, and a servant bearing, in a mahogany case, the numerous accessories he had added to his repertory, such as different kinds of vinegar, oils with or without a fruity flavour, soy, caviare, truffles, anchovies, catchup, meat extracts, and even yolks of egg, which are the distinguishing feature of *mayonnaise*.

Later, he had cases of the kind manufactured, which he fitted out complete and sold by the hundred.

In the end, as the result of a well-planned and carefully conducted campaign, he realised a fortune of more than eighty thousand francs, which he brought to *France* with him when times had improved.

Back once more in the land of his birth, he found no pleasure in adorning the Paris pavements, but preferred to secure his fortune. He invested sixty thousand francs in the public funds, which then stood at fifty, and with the remaining twenty thousand bought a modest estate in *Limousin*, where he is probably still living happy and contented, since he knows how to limit his desires.

I had these details from one of *d'Albignac's* friends, who had known him in *London*, and had met him again shortly after his return to *Paris*.



XIV. More Memories of Exile

The Weaver IN 1794 *M. Rostaing*¹ and myself were in *Switzerland*, showing a calm face to adversity, and preserving our love for the land of our birth and persecution.

We came to *Mondon*, where I had connections, and were made welcome by the *Trollet* family with a kindness I shall ever gratefully remember.

The family, one of the oldest in the country, is now extinct, the last male representative having left only a daughter, who herself has borne no sons.

At *Mondon* I became acquainted with a young French officer who plied a weaver's trade ; and this is how he came to do so.

He was a youth of very good family, and happening to pass through *Mondon* on his way to join *Condé's* army, had for his neighbour at an ordinary an old man whose features displayed

¹ *M. le Baron Rostaing*, my relative and friend, now Military Governor of *Lyons*. An administrator of the first ability, he has perfected a system of military accountancy so clear that it ought to be universally adopted.

XIV. *More Memories of Exile*

that combination of gravity with animation which painters give to the comrades of *William Tell*.

Over dessert they talked ; the officer made no secret of his position, and received several marks of interest from his neighbour, who condoled with him upon his being forced, so early in life, to give up all that was dearest to him, and called his attention to the justice of *Rousseau's* maxim, that every man should learn a trade to fall back on in case of adversity, and so be proof against starvation. As for himself, he declared that he was a weaver, a childless widower, and contented with his lot.

There the conversation ended ; the officer left the day following, and shortly afterwards took his place in the ranks of *Condé's* army. But from what he saw of the condition of affairs both within that army and elsewhere, he easily perceived that he could never hope to return to *France* by that door. It was not long before he met with his share of the disheartening experiences which were the rule for such as had no qualification beyond their zeal for the royal cause ; and at length he was made the victim of a piece of favouritism, or something of the kind, which seemed to him a crying injustice.

Then it was that the old weaver's discourse came into his head ; he pondered over it for a while, and then, having made up his mind, left the army, returned to *Mondon*, sought out the weaver, and asked to be received as his apprentice.

'I will not miss this chance of performing a good action,' the old man answered. 'You shall eat at my table ; I only know one thing, and that I will teach you ; I have but one bed, which you shall share ; you will work thus for a year, and after that you shall set up on your own account, and live happily in a land where work is honoured and encouraged.'

The very next day, the officer set to work, and succeeded so well that at the end of six months his master declared that he had nothing more to teach him, that he considered himself more than repaid for the care he had taken of him, and that thenceforth whatever he did should be to his own profit.

When I came to *Mondon*, the new artisan had already made enough money to buy himself a loom and a bed ; he worked with remarkable steadiness, and so much interest was taken in him, that the best houses in the town, by mutual arrangement, asked him to dinner by turns every Sunday.

On that day he donned his uniform, and resumed the position in society that was his by right ; and as he was both agreeable

and intelligent, everybody made much of him. But on Mondays he turned weaver again, and having grown accustomed to this alternatè mode of existence, seemed not dissatisfied with his lot.

The Faster

To the above picture of the advantages of industry I am going to add another of a directly opposite kind.

I met in *Lausanne* an *émigré* from *Lyons*, a tall and well-made youth, who in order to avoid work had hit upon the plan of only eating twice a week. He would have starved to death with the best grace in the world, had not a rich merchant of the town opened a credit for him at a tavern, where he was allowed to dine free on Sundays and Wednesdays.

On each of these days the exile would enter the tavern, stuff himself to the œsophagus, and depart, not without carrying off a large piece of bread, which he was allowed to do by the terms of the agreement.

This supplementary fare he husbanded as best he might, drinking water when his stomach gave him pain, and passing a large part of his time in bed, in a not unpleasant state of dreamy somnolence, until the time of his next meal came round.

When I met him, he had been living in this fashion for three months ; he was not ill, but an air of such languor reigned over all his person, his features were so drawn, and there was something so Hippocratical about the space between his nose and ears, that he was painful to behold.

I marvelled that he should submit to such anguish rather than seek to utilise his person, and invited him to dinner at my inn, when he acquitted himself in a manner to inspire awe. But I never repeated the offence, for I prefer a man to stand up against adversity, and to comply, when there is need, with the sentence passed on the whole race of man : *Thou shalt work*.

The *Lion*
d'Argent

WHAT dinners we had in those days at *Lausanne*, at the *Lion d'Argent* !

For the sum of fifteen *batz* (2 fr. 25 c.) we might pass three full courses in review, including, among much else, excellent game from the surrounding mountains and delicious fish from *Lake Geneva*, all which we humectified with a small white wine, as limpid as water from the rock, which would have made a very madman drink.

The top end of the table was always occupied by a canon of *Notre-Dame* (I hope he still lives), who had made himself at
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XIV. *More Memories of Exile*

home there, and in front of whom the *kellner* always placed whatever was best in the menu.

He paid me the signal compliment of summoning me to his side, in the quality of aide-de-camp ; but I had not enjoyed the distinction very long, before the tide of events swept me off to *America*, where I found refuge, work, and peace.

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—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—

Sojourn in
America

I WILL close this chapter with the story of an experience of Battle my own which proves that nothing is sure in this world below, and that misfortune sometimes overtakes us at the very moment when we least expect it.

I was leaving for *France*, after three years' sojourn in the *United States* ; and my time there had passed so pleasantly that all I asked of heaven (and my prayer was not in vain), in the emotion of departure, was that I might be no more unfortunate in the Old World than I had been in the New.

That I prospered there, be it said, was chiefly due to this : that from the day of my arrival among the *Americans*, I spoke their language,¹ dressed like them, took care not to be cleverer than they, and praised all their ways ; thus repaying the hospitality I met with among them by a form of condescension which I commend to all who may find themselves in like circumstances.

Peaceably, then, was I leaving a land where I had lived at peace with all men, and there could have been no featherless biped in all creation whose love for his fellows was more real than mine ; when there occurred an incident, quite independent of my will, which came very near ending the tale with a tragedy.

I was on board the packet that was to convey me from *New York* to *Philadelphia* ; and you must know that in order to complete this voyage up to time, it is necessary to profit by the turn of the tide.

It was slack water, then, that is to say, the ebb was about to set in, and we were thus due to start ; yet there was no sign of any movement being made to cast off.

¹ I sat next to a *Creole* one day at dinner, who had lived two years in *New York*, and still did not know enough English to be able to ask for bread. I expressed my astonishment at this : 'Bah,' he replied, shrugging his shoulders, 'do you suppose I would ever trouble to learn the language of so dull a race ?'

There were a number of us *Frenchmen* aboard, including a certain *Sieur Gautier*, who should still be living in *Paris* : a very good fellow, who ruined himself in his effort to build, *ultra vires*, the house which forms the south-western angle of the Ministry of Finance.

The cause of the delay was soon made known : it was due to the non-arrival of two *Americans*, for whose benefit the ship was being held back, which exposed us to the risk of being caught by low tide, and thus taking twice as long to reach our destination ; for the sea waits for no man.

Hence loud complaints, chiefly from French tongues ; for a *Frenchman's* passions are far more easily aroused than those of the inhabitants of the further shores of the *Atlantic*.

I myself not only took no part in the outcry, but was hardly even conscious of it, for my heart was full to overflowing with dreams of what Fate held in store for me in *France*. But it cannot have been long before I heard a crash, and saw that it came from *Gautier's* having saluted an American cheek with a blow that would have brought a rhinoceros down.

This act of violence was the immediate cause of dire confusion. The words *Frenchmen* and *Americans* having been several times pronounced in hostile tones, the quarrel assumed a national character ; and no less was proposed than to throw us all overboard into the sea : a stiff undertaking, be it added, for we were certainly not less than eight against eleven.

Now I, to all outward appearance, was the individual who seemed likely to offer the most resistance to the *transboardation* ; for I am tall and broad, and was then but thirty-nine. Hence, no doubt, the launching against me by the foe of their most imposing warrior, who now came and squared up against me.

He was tall as a steeple, and proportionately heavy ; but measuring him from top to toe with a marrow-piercing glance, I saw that he was of a lymphatic temperament, that his face was puffy, his eyes dull, his head small, and his legs like a woman's.

'*Mens non agitat molem*,' said I to myself : 'let us see how much he will stand, and then die if need be.' And aloud I addressed him word for word as follows, like one of *Homer's* heroes :

'Do you believe¹ to bully me, you damned rogue ? By

¹ There is no thee and thou-ing in English ; a carter, even as he whips his horse, cries, 'Go, sir, go, I say (*sic*).'

XIV. *More Memories of Exile*

God ! It will not be so . . . and I'll overboard you like a dead cat. . . . If I find you too heavy, I'll cling to you with hands, legs, teeth, nails, everything, and if I cannot do better, we will sink together to the bottom ; my life is nothing to send such a dog to hell. Now, just now . . . (*sic*).'¹

Hearing these words, which were doubtless reflected in my bearing (for I felt the strength of *Hercules* upon me), my man shrank a full inch, his arms fell to his sides, and his cheeks sagged perceptibly : in a word, he displayed such evident signs of dismay that one of his comrades—doubtless he who had first thrust him forward—made as if to interpose ; and he did well, for I was thoroughly roused, and that native of the New World would soon have discovered that those who bathe in the waters of *Furens*² have sinews of tempered steel.

Meanwhile words of peace had begun to be heard in the other part of the ship ; the arrival of the late-comers caused a diversion, and was followed by the business of setting sail ; so that while I was still in warlike posture the tumult suddenly ceased.

Matters improved still further ; for when all was quiet again, I went in search of *Gautier*, intending to rebuke him for his hot-headedness, and found him at table with his victim, in the presence of a very comely ham and a pitcher of beer that stood at least a cubit high.

XV. The Bundle of Asparagus

ONE fine day in the month of February, being on my way to the *Palais-Royal*, I stopped before the shop of *Mme Chevet*, the most famous provision-merchant in *Paris*, who has long allowed me to enjoy the honour of her friendship ; and perceiving a bundle of asparagus, the least of which was fatter than my index finger, I asked her the price of it. 'Forty francs, *monsieur*,'

¹ In lands governed according to the English penal code, assault is always preceded by an exchange of insults ; for they have a saying, 'High words break no bones.' Frequently this is as far as it goes, and the law makes a man think twice before striking ; for he who strikes the first blow breaks the peace, and will always be convicted of assault, whatever the result of the fight.

² A limpid stream which, rising above *Rosillon*, flows close by *Belley*, and joins the *Rhône* above *Peyrieux*. The flesh of the trout caught in it is rosy pink, that of the pike as white as ivory. *Gut ! Gut ! Gut !* (Germ.).

was her reply. 'They are certainly beauties ; but at such a price no one but the king or some prince will be able to eat them.' 'You are mistaken ; such luxuries never find their way into palaces ; there goodness, not magnificence, is the rule ; but for all that, my bundle of asparagus will sell, and this will be the way of it :

'At the present moment there are at least three hundred very wealthy men in *Paris*, bankers, merchants, capitalists, and others, who are kept at home by gout, fear of catching cold, doctor's orders, or other causes that do not prevent them from eating ; they sit by the fire, racking their brains to think of something really appetising, and when they are exhausted with the effort, and all in vain, they send their valet out on the same quest. The valet will come to me, he will see the asparagus, and return with his report ; and immediately they will be sent for, no matter what the price. Or, perhaps, a young woman will pass this way with her lover, and cry : " See, dearest, what lovely asparagus ! *Do let us get them !* " You know what delicious sauce my woman makes for them ! " Well, in such a case no lover worth his salt will stop to bargain. Or it may be a wager, or a baptism, or a sudden rise in the funds. . . . How can I tell what it may be ? In a word, the dearest things go more quickly than anything else, because in *Paris* the course of life brings about so many different circumstances, that there is never any lack of sufficient motives.'

The words were scarcely out of her mouth, when two fat *Englishmen*, who were strolling along arm in arm, stopped in front of us, and instantly their faces lit up with admiration. One of them had the miraculous bundle wrapped up without so much as asking the price, tucked it under his arm, and carried it off, whistling *God Save the King*.

'There, *monsieur*,' said *Mme Chevet*, laughing, 'there was a chance which I had not yet spoken of, but which is as common as any of the others.'

XVI. The Fondue

XVI. The Fondue

THE *fondue* originated in *Switzerland*, and is neither more nor less than eggs broiled with cheese, in certain proportions revealed by time and experience. I append the official recipe.

It is a wholesome, savoury, and appetising dish, and being quickly cooked, is always useful when guests arrive unexpectedly. I write of it here partly for my own satisfaction, and partly because the word recalls an incident still talked of by the older folk of *Belley*.

About the end of the seventeenth century, one *M. de Madot* was nominated to the see of *Belley*, and arrived to take up his appointment.

Those to whom it fell to receive him, and do him the honours of his own palace, had prepared a feast worthy of the occasion, and used all the culinary resources of the day to celebrate *Monseigneur's* advent.

Among the side-dishes shone an ample *fondue*, to which *Monseigneur* freely helped himself. But oh, surprise ! deceived by its exterior, he mistook it for a *crème*, and ate it with a spoon, instead of using the fork which has been the recognised implement since time immemorial.

All the guests present, astounded by this odd behaviour, glanced at one another out of the corners of their eyes, smiling imperceptibly. Respect, however, tied all tongues, for a bishop from *Paris* can do nothing at table that is not done well, especially on the very day of his arrival.

But the thing was noised abroad, and next day, whenever two were gathered together, it was, 'Have you heard how the new bishop ate his *fondue* last night ?' 'Indeed I have ; he ate it with a spoon. I had it from an eye-witness.' The town told the tale to the country ; and by the end of three months it was common knowledge throughout the diocese.

The remarkable thing is that the incident did not shake the faith of our fathers. There were, it is true, would-be reformers who spoke up in favour of the spoon ; but they were soon forgotten ; the fork triumphed, and more than a hundred years later one of my grand-uncles could still enjoy the joke, and

laughed heartily as he told me how *M. de Madot* had once eaten *fondue* with a spoon.

RECIPE FOR MAKING A FONDUE

As found among the papers of *M. Trollet*, steward
of *Mondon*, in the canton of *Berne*

Take as many eggs as are required for the number of your guests, and weigh them ;

Then take a piece of good Gruyère cheese weighing a third, and a piece of butter weighing a sixth, of that weight ;

Break and beat up the eggs in a casserole ; which done, add the butter and the cheese grated ;

Set the casserole over a brisk fire, and stir with a wooden spoon until the mixture is suitably thick and soft ; put in a little salt, or none, according to whether the cheese is more or less old, and a strong dose of pepper, which is one of the positive features of this antique preparation ; serve in a slightly heated dish, send for your best wine, and let the same be roundly quaffed, when you will see marvels.



XVII. Disappointment

ALL was quiet one day in the *Écu de France* Inn at *Bourg*, in *Bresse*, when suddenly a loud noise of wheels was heard, and a superb berlin drove up, drawn by four horses, English style, and especially remarkable for the presence on the coachman's seat of two pretty abigails, snugly enveloped in a rug of scarlet cloth, lined and edged with blue.

At this apparition, which clearly betokened a milord travelling by short stages, *Chicot* (for so the innkeeper was called) ran out cap in hand ; his wife stood waiting in the doorway ; the maids nearly broke their necks hurrying downstairs, and the stable-lads ran up, already counting on a generous tip.

The two fair retainers were helped down from their perch, not without blushing a little, by reason of the hazardous descent ; and the berlin brought forth, first, a short, fat, ruddy, and paunchified milord ; second, two long, pale, and red-haired misses ; and third, milady, who seemed to be between the first and second stages of consumption.

Milady was the party's spokesman.

'*Monsieur l'aubergiste*,' said she, 'let my horses be well baited ; show us to a room where we can rest, and have some refreshment brought for my chambermaids ; but understand, I wish the whole to cost not more than six francs ; take your measures accordingly.'

Which economical phrase was no sooner uttered than *Chicot* put on his cap again, his wife withdrew indoors, and the girls returned to their posts.

The horses, however, were led to the stable, and there given the papers to read ; the ladies were shown into a room upstairs, and the two abigails were furnished with glasses and a jug of the purest water.

Yet the six stipulated francs were received but sourly, as being a paltry recompense for all the trouble caused and hopes dashed to the ground.

XVIII. Marvellous Effects of a Classic Dinner

'*ALAS*, how am I to be pitied !' said a gastronome of the royal court upon *Seine* one day, in elegiac tones. 'In the expectation of returning shortly to my country house, I left my cook there ; now business keeps me in *Paris*, and I am left at the mercy of a mere lay-woman whose preparations sicken my very soul. My wife will put up with anything, my children are too young to understand. What with *bouilli* underdone, and roast overdone, I am dying at once by spit and cauldron. *Alas !*'

So he spoke, dolefully crossing the *Place Dauphiné*. Happily for the public weal, the Professor overheard his just complaint, and in the plaintiff recognised a friend. 'You shall not die,' said he to the martyr magistrate : 'no, you shall not die while I can offer you an infallible remedy. Be my guest to-morrow at a classic dinner ; no ceremony ; after dinner, a game of piquet which we will arrange in such a way that everyone is amused, and so, like all its predecessors, the evening will go down into the gulf of the past.'

The invitation was accepted, and the mystery accomplished in accordance with the customs, rites, and ceremonies ordained ;

XVIII. Effects of a Classic Dinner

and since that day (June 23rd, 1825) it has much gratified the Professor to think that he preserved for the royal court one of the worthiest of its pillars.

XIX. Dangerous Effects of Strong Liquors

THE factitious thirst of which mention was made in Meditation VIII, the thirst which demands to be momentarily allayed with strong liquors, in time becomes so intense and habitual, that those who give way to it cannot pass a night without drinking, and are under the necessity of leaving their beds to slake it.

Such a thirst then becomes an absolute disease, and when an individual has come to this pass, it may be confidently prophesied that less than two years of life are left to him.

I was once travelling in *Holland* with a wealthy Dantzic merchant, who had been for fifty years at the head of the chief brandy-retailing establishment in that town.

'*Monsieur*,' said this patriarch to me one day, 'you in *France* have no notion of the importance of the business we do, and have been doing, from father to son, for more than a century. I have closely observed the labouring folk who come to my shop, and when they yield unreservedly to the craving for strong liquor, which is all too common in *Germany*, they all come to the same end in much the same way.

'At first they only drink a small glass of brandy in the morning, and are content with that for several years (for you must know that the morning dram is universal among the labouring classes, and whoever went without would be laughed at); then they double the dose, that is to say, they drink a glass first thing in the morning, and another in the middle of the day. They continue at that rate for two or three years; then they take to drinking regularly three times a day, morning, noon, and evening. And very soon they are drinking brandy at all hours, and will have none but that flavoured with an infusion of cloves; and when once that stage is reached, it is certain that they have six months to live at the outside; they waste away, fever takes hold of their system, they go to hospital, and are no more seen.'

XX. The Chevaliers and Abbés

I HAVE twice before referred to these two categories of gourmand, both of which have been destroyed by time.

It is more than thirty years since they disappeared, so that the greater part of the present generation have never seen them.

They will probably appear again towards the end of this century ; but as such a phenomenon requires the coincidence of many future contingents, I believe that very few persons now living will survive to witness the palingenesis.

It therefore behoves me, as a painter of manners and customs, to put the finishing touches to my picture of them ; and to this end I have borrowed the following passage from an author who has nothing to refuse me¹ :

‘ Properly, and according to precedent, the qualification of chevalier should only have been allowed to persons decorated with an order, or to younger sons of titled houses ; but in fact many were self-created, finding it well worth while to give themselves the accolade ; for if the wearer was but well educated and of good appearance, so easy-going was the spirit of the age that no one ever troubled to investigate his claim.

‘ The chevaliers were usually fine figures of men ; they wore their swords vertical, and strutted head in air and nose to the wind ; they were deep players, libertines, and blusterers, and no fashionable beauty’s train was complete without them.

‘ They were further distinguished for their extreme courage, and the excessive ease with which they bared their swords. Sometimes it was only necessary to look at them, to be called out on the spot.

‘ So it was that the *Chevalier de S . . .*, one of the most conspicuous of his time, met his end.

‘ He picked a gratuitous quarrel with a young man newly arrived from *Charolles* ; and the pair met at the back of the *Chaussée-d’Antin*, which at that time was almost all waste ground.

‘ By the cool way in which the newcomer put himself on guard, *S . . .* easily perceived that he had no novice to deal with ; none the less, he set about putting him to the test ; but at the

¹ See Translator’s note, p. 123.

XX. *The Chevaliers and Abbés*

very first pass the *Charollais* found an opening, and thrust home to such effect that the Chevalier was dead before he reached the ground. One of his friends, who had been his second, looked long and silently at the wound made by that lightning thrust, and traced the course followed by the sword ; then, "What a perfect thrust *en quarte des armes*," said he suddenly, taking leave of the scene, "and what a wrist that youth must have !" The dead man received no other funeral oration.

'When the wars of the Revolution broke out, most of the chevaliers joined one or other of the battalions ; some emigrated, and the rest were lost in the crowd. The survivors, who are few in number, may still be recognised by their fine airs ; but they are very thin, and walk with difficulty ; they have the gout.'

'When there were several sons in a noble family, one was sent into the Church ; for a start, he would obtain simple benefices, to defray the costs of his education ; and in course of time he would become a prince, commendatory abbé, or bishop, according to the apostolic fervour of his disposition.

'Such was the genuine abbé ; but there were also false ones ; and many a youth of means, holding a chevalier's career to be too hazardous, gave himself the style and title of abbé when he came to *Paris*.

'Nothing could be more convenient ; at the cost of a slight alteration in his attire, he suddenly seemed beneficed ; where-upon he became anybody's equal, and was welcomed everywhere, spoiled, and run after ; for there was never a house without its abbé.

'The abbés were short, plump little men, very neatly dressed, coaxing in their ways, complaisant, full of curiosity, alert, insinuating, and gourmands ; those who are left have run to fat and turned religious.

'No life could be pleasanter than that of a rich prior or commendatory abbé ; he had money and the world's respect, no superiors, and nothing to do.

'The chevaliers will appear again, if peace lasts long enough, as let us hope it will ; but failing a drastic change in ecclesiastical administration, the race of abbés is lost beyond recall ; there are no more *sinécures* ; and we have returned to the principles of the primitive Church : *beneficium propter officium*.'

XXI. Miscellanea

'*Monsieur le conseiller*,' said an old marquise of the *Faubourg Saint-Germain* one day, speaking across the table from one end to the other, 'which do you prefer, Burgundy or claret?' 'Madame,' replied the magistrate so questioned, in druidic tones, 'tis a case in which I so much enjoy examining the evidence, that I invariably postpone judgment for a week.'

* * *

There was served up, at the table of an amphitryon of the *Chaussée-d'Antin*, an Arles sausage of heroic build. 'Pray accept a slice,' said he to his fair neighbour; 'tis a piece that, I hope, proclaims a well-furnished house.' 'It is big enough, certainly,' replied the lady, eyeing it slyly through her quizzing-glass; 'what a pity it resembles nothing!'

* * *

Witty folk are those who hold gourmandism in highest honour; others are incapable of an operation which consists in a series of judgments and appreciations.

Mme la Comtesse de Genlis boasts, in her *Memoirs*, of having taught a German lady, who had received her well, the method of preparing as many as seven delicious dishes.

* * *

M. le Comte de la Place was the discoverer of a very special way of accommodating strawberries, by moistening them with the juice of a sweet orange (apple of the *Hesperides*).

Another sage has further improved upon this device by adding the rind of the orange, which he rubs off with a lump of sugar: and he claims to have proved, through a fragment of manuscript saved from the flames which devoured the library of *Alexandria*, that this was the way of seasoning strawberries at the banquets of *Mt. Ida*.

* * *

'I've no great notion of him,' said *M. le Comte de M . . .*, speaking of a recently successful political place-hunter: 'he has never eaten black pudding *à la Richelieu*, nor even heard of cutlets *à la Soubise*.'

* * *

A hard drinker, being at table, was offered grapes at dessert.

XXI. *Miscellanea*

‘Thank you,’ said he, pushing the dish away from him, ‘but I am not in the habit of taking my wine in pills.’

* * *

An amateur was being congratulated upon his appointment as assessor of rates and taxes at *Périgueux* ; his friends enlarged on the pleasant life he would lead at the very heart of good cheer, in the country of truffles, partridges, truffled turkey, etc., etc. ‘Alas,’ said the aggrieved gastronome, ‘is it so certain a man can live at all, in a land where the tide never rises ?’



XXII. A Day with the Monks of St. Bernard

It was nearly one o'clock of a fine summer's night when we formed a cavalcade, not without first vigorously serenading those of the fair whose fortune it was to possess our hearts (the year is 1782).

We were setting forth from *Belley*, and our goal was *Saint-Sulpice*, a Bernardine Abbey situated on one of the highest mountains in the neighbourhood, at least five thousand feet above sea-level. In those days I was leader of a troop of amateur minstrels, all friends of joy, and endowed in full measure with the virtues that belong to youth and health.

'*Monsieur*,' the Abbot of *Saint-Sulpice* had said one day, drawing me aside, after dinner, into a window-embrasure ; 'you would do a great kindness if you were to come and play for us on *St. Bernard's Day* ; the saint would be the more completely glorified, our community would be delighted, and you would have the honour of being the first *Orpheuses* to invade those lofty regions.'

XXII. *A Day with the Monks of St. Bernard*

I gave him no cause to repeat an invitation of such pleasant promise, but accepted with a nod wherewith the whole room shook and trembled :

Annuït, et totum nutu tremefecit Olympon.

All necessary measures having been taken beforehand, we set forth betimes ; for we had four leagues to travel, along roads that might daunt even those bold explorers who have braved the heights of dread *Montmartre*.

The monastery was built in a valley enclosed on the west by the summit of the mountain, and on the east by a less lofty hill.

The western peak was crowned by a forest of pine-trees, thirty-seven thousand of which were one day laid low by a single blast of wind.¹ The bottom of the valley was one vast meadow, with clumps of beeches dotted here and there at irregular intervals, like huge-scale models of the little English gardens now in fashion.

We arrived as day broke, and were greeted by the father cellarer, whose face was quadrangular, and his nose an obelisk.

'*Messieurs*,' said the good father, 'you are welcome ; our reverend abbot will be glad indeed to hear of your arrival ; he is still in bed, for last night he was very tired ; but come with me, and you shall see if we expected you.'

He said, and led the way ; and we followed, rightly suspecting our goal to be the refectory.

There all our senses were entranced by the apparition of a most seductive breakfast, a very classic among breakfasts.

Midmost upon a spacious table uprose a *pâté*, tall as a church ; to the north it was flanked by a cold quarter of veal, to the south by a mighty ham, to the east by a monumental pat of butter, and to the west by a bushel of fresh artichokes, with pepper and salt in plenty.

Different kinds of fruit, too, we saw, with plates and knives, napkins, and baskets of silver ; and at one end of the table stood lay brothers and servants ready to wait on us, although surprised to find themselves afoot so early.

In a corner of the refectory we saw a pile of more than a hundred bottles, continuously watered by a natural spring that seemed to murmur *Evoe Bacche* as it flowed ; and if the smell

¹ The Ministry of Waters and Forests counted them and sold them ; trade profited by the sale, the monks also gained, large sums of money were put in circulation, and no one had a word to say against the hurricane.

of Mocha tickled not our nostrils, 'twas because in those heroic times none drank coffee so early in the day.

For a space the reverend cellarer enjoyed our wonderment in silence ; then he pronounced the following allocution, which our wisdom judged to have been prepared beforehand.

'*Messieurs,*' said he, 'I would gladly keep you company ; but I have not yet said my Mass, and to-day is a day of full service. I would invite you to eat, but that your youth, your journey hither, and our keen mountain air combine to make the invitation needless. Be pleased to accept what we most heartily offer you ; and now, I leave you, and go to sing mattins.'

With these words he departed from our sight.

It was time for action ; and we attacked with all the vigour aroused by the three aggravating circumstances so well indicated by the cellarer. But what availed weak sons of *Adam* against a meal seemingly prepared for the inhabitants of *Sirius* ? Our efforts were in vain ; all that we could hold we ate, yet left but imperceptible traces of our passage.

And so, well fortified till dinner-time, we dispersed ; and I for one lay down on a comfortable bed, and slept peacefully until Mass, like the hero of *Rocroy* and many another warrior that has slept till the moment when the fight began.

I was roused by a muscular brother, who nearly pulled my arm out of its socket, and ran to church, where I found everyone already at his post.

We performed a symphony during the offertory, sang a motet during the celebration, and finished up with a quartet for wind instruments. And for all the jokes that are made against amateur music, respect for truth compels me to affirm that we gave a very good account of ourselves.

And here let me remark that those who are never satisfied with anything are almost always ignorant dunces, and only scoff so loudly in hopes that their boldness will gain them credit for accomplishments they lack the courage to acquire.

On the present occasion, we received with becoming grace the praises that were lavished on us, and, after the abbot himself had thanked us, betook ourselves to table.

Dinner was served in the taste of the fifteenth century, with few side-dishes, and few superfluities of any kind ; but an excellent choice of meats, simple and substantial *ragoûts*, a good kitchen, perfect cooking, and, above all, vegetables of a savour

XXII. *A Day with the Monks of St. Bernard*

unknown at lower levels, combined to remove all desire for anything not seen.

We shall convey a notion of the abundance prevailing in that fair place, when we say that the second course embraced as many as fourteen different roasts.

Dessert was particularly noteworthy, being in part composed of fruits which do not grow at such altitudes, but which had been brought from the neighbouring valleys ; the gardens of *Machuraz*, *Morflent*, and other places smiled on by the starry sire of heat, had been laid under contribution.

Nor was there any lack of liqueurs : but the coffee merits special mention.

Limpid it was, scented and wondrous hot ; but above all, it was served, not in those degenerate vessels which they dare, on the banks of the *Seine*, to call *cups*, but in fair, deep bowls wherein the worthy fathers plunged their thick lips with a will, and sucked up the life-giving liquid with a noise that would have done credit to two sperm whales fleeing before a storm.

After dinner we went to vespers, and between the psalms performed antiphons composed by myself expressly for the occasion. They were music of the fashion then prevailing ; and I shall speak neither ill nor well of them, for fear lest I should be held back by modesty or made partial by a father's love.

The official day being thus brought to a close, the neighbours who had come to church departed homewards, and the brethren were left free to indulge in games and pastimes.

For myself, I preferred to stretch my legs ; and, collecting some of my friends, went forth to tread the sweet springy turf, which is worth all the carpets of *Savonnerie*, and to breathe the pure mountain air, which is balm to a man's soul and turns his thoughts to meditation and romance.¹

It was late when we returned. The abbot came to wish me good evening and a good night's rest. 'I am leaving you,' said he, 'to finish the evening without me. Not that I believe my presence would be irksome to our brothers ; but I wish them to know that they have full liberty. It is not always *St. Bernard's Day* ; to-morrow we resume our accustomed way of life : *cras iterabimus æquor*.'

¹ I have often remarked the same effect in similar circumstances, and am inclined to believe that the lightness of the atmosphere in the mountains allows certain cerebral forces to act, which its weight at lower levels oppresses.

In point of fact, after the abbot's departure there was less restraint observed ; the talk grew louder, and there was more cracking of those specifically cloistral jokes which mean little enough, and at which all laugh without exactly knowing why.

About nine o'clock supper was served : a choice and dainty meal, at several centuries' remove from the preceding dinner.

We ate with renewed gusto, talked, laughed, and sang table songs ; and one of the fathers read some verses of his own, which were by no means bad for a tonsured poet.

When the evening was far advanced, a voice was heard above the rest, crying, ' Father Cellarer, where is your speciality ? ' ' You are right,' the reverend man replied, ' I am not cellarer for nothing.'

And he went out, to return presently accompanied by three servitors, the first of whom bore freshly buttered toast, and the other two a table, on which was a great bowl of sweetened, flaming brandy, which last took the place of punch, at that date still unknown.

A round of applause greeted the newcomers ; the toast was eaten and the burnt brandy drunk ; and soon the clock struck twelve, when each sought his cell, there to enjoy the sweets of a sleep to which the day's labours had both inclined and entitled him.

N.B.—When the father cellarer, of whom mention is made in this veracious narrative, came to be an old man, there was one day talk in his presence of a newly appointed abbot who was on his way from *Paris*, and who had the reputation of being a martinet.

' I am quite easy about him,' said the reverend father : ' let him be as strict as he pleases, he will never be so hard as to deprive an old man either of his corner by the fire or the cellar keys.'



XXIII. Traveller's Luck

ONE day, mounted on my good horse *La Joie*, I was crossing the genial slopes of the *Jura*.

It was in the worst days of the Revolution, and I was on my way to *Dôle*, to see *Representative Prôt*, and to obtain from him, if possible, a safe-conduct which should serve to keep me out of prison, and in all likelihood from going thence to the scaffold.

At eleven o'clock in the morning I halted at an inn in the small township or village of *Mont-sous-Vaudrey*; and having first attended to the wants of my mount, walked into the kitchen, where a sight met my gaze which no traveller can ever have beheld without emotion.

In front of the glowing fire a spit was slowly turning, most admirably decked with quails, yea, kings among quails, and as well with those little green-footed landrails which excel in plumpness. This choice game was yielding its last drops on to a mighty round of toast, the fashioning whereof proclaimed a sportsman's hand; and close beside it, ready cooked, lay one of those well-nourished leverets which *Parisians* know not,

and the smell of which would fill a church as sweetly as any incense.

'Good !' said I to myself, much cheered by the sight of these things : ' Providence has not yet utterly forsaken me. Here's one more flower to pluck by the wayside ; there will always be time to die.'

Then, addressing mine host, a man of giant frame, who throughout my examination had been walking to and fro across the kitchen, with his hands behind his back, whistling : ' My friend,' said I, ' what good things are you going to offer me for dinner ?' ' Good things only, *monsieur*, and none else,' he answered : ' good *bouilli*, good potato soup, good shoulder of mutton, and good haricot beans.'

At this unexpected reply, a shiver of disappointment ran through all my limbs ; the reader knows that I never eat *bouilli*, because it is meat deprived of its juices ; beans and potatoes are alike obnoxious ; my teeth, I felt, were not of tempered steel for the rending of mutton : the menu, in a word, was expressly designed to break my heart, and all my woes descended on me once again.

Mine host looked knowingly at me, and seemed to divine the cause of my disappointment. . . . ' And for whom, pray, are you keeping all this fine game ?' I inquired, with an air of extreme vexation. ' Alas, *monsieur*,' he sympathetically answered, ' it is not mine to dispose of ; it all belongs to some legal gentlemen, who have been here these ten days past, employed on a valuation which concerns a certain very wealthy lady ; they finished their work yesterday, and are celebrating the happy event with a feast ; breaking out, as we say in these parts.' ' *Monsieur*,' I replied, after a moment's reflection, ' be so good as to tell these gentlemen that a man of good company begs, as a favour, to be allowed to join them at dinner ; that he will bear his share of the cost ; and above all, that he will be profoundly indebted to them.' I said : he departed and did not return.

But a few moments later, a short, fat, fresh-complexioned, chubby, sprightly little man came in, prowled round the kitchen, shifted one or two pots and pans, raised the lid of a casserole, and went out again.

' Good,' said I to myself : ' the brother tiler, sent to take stock of me.' And I began to hope, for experience had already taught me that my exterior is not repellent.

Nevertheless my heart was beating like that of a candidate

XXIII. *Traveller's Luck*

waiting to be told that he has been plucked, when the host reappeared, and announced that the gentlemen were highly flattered by my proposal, and only waited for me to join them before they sat down to table.

I danced out of the room, met with the most flattering reception, and within a few minutes had taken root.

What a dinner that was ! I will not describe it in detail ; but honourable mention is surely due to a chicken fricassee of the most distinguished craftsmanship, such as can only be met with in country places, and so richly dowered with truffles that it would have made old *Tithonus* brisk again.

The roast has been described already ; its taste did not fall short of its appearance ; it was done to a turn, and the difficulty I had experienced in attaining to it still further enhanced its savour.

Dessert was composed of a vanilla *crème*, choice fruit, and excellent cheese. And all these good things we washed down first with a light wine of the hue of garnets ; then with Hermitage ; after that with a straw-coloured wine as soft as it was generous ; and the whole was crowned with some first-rate coffee, confectioned by the sprightly tiler, who also used a free hand in respect of certain Verdun liqueurs, which he produced from a species of tabernacle of which he had the key.

Not only was the dinner good, it was very gay also.

Having talked awhile, with due circumspection, of the affairs of the day, my gentlemen fell to making jests at one another's expense, in a manner which enlightened me as to a part of their biographies ; they said little of the business which had brought them together ; good stories were told, and songs sung, to which I responded with some unpublished verses of my own, and even delivered some lines impromptu, which were received with generous applause ; here they are :

AIR : *du Maréchal Ferrant.*

OH, 'tis a pleasant thing and sweet
When kindly folk the traveller greet,
And merriment and wine flow free ;
With such good fellows and such cheer,
How gladly could I tarry here,
Secure from all anxiety,

Four days,
Fourteen days,
Forty days,
A year, nor go

While the bless'd Fates detain'd me so !

If I record these verses here, it is not that I much admire them ; I have written better in my time, thanks be to Heaven ! and could improve these if I chose ; but I prefer to leave them in their impromptu shape, in hopes that the reader will agree with me that he who could make so merry, with a revolutionary gang at his elbow, had the heart and head of a true *Frenchman*.

We must have been at least four hours at table, when the question arose of how best to finish the day : and it was decided to take a long walk, for digestion's sake, and thereafter to play a game of ombre while waiting for the evening meal, which was already commandeered in the form of a dish of trout and the still very desirable remnants of our dinner.

To each of these proposals I was obliged to say no ; the sun, declining towards the horizon, warned me to be moving. My companions pressed me to stay, as warmly as politeness would allow of, and only gave way upon my assuring them that my journey was not entirely a matter of pleasure.

As the reader will have guessed, they would hear no word about my share of the reckoning ; they refrained from putting awkward questions to me, and all came out to see me mount ; and so we parted, after exchanging the heartiest farewells.

If any of those who used me so hospitably that day is still living, and this book should fall into his hands, I wish him to know that more than thirty years later this chapter was penned with the liveliest feelings of gratitude.

Strokes of luck never come singly, and my journey was crowned with an almost un hoped-for success.

Representative Prôt, indeed, I found strongly prejudiced in my disfavour ; he eyed me with a sinister air, and I made certain he was going to have me arrested ; however, I was let off with nothing worse than my fears, and after a few explanations his features seemed to lose some of their grimness.

I am not one of those whom fear embitters, and I do not believe this man's intentions were altogether bad ; but he was a man of small capacity, and knew not what to do with the dreadful powers entrusted to him : he was like a child armed with the club of *Hercules*.

M. Amondru, whose name I here record with extreme pleasure, found it no easy matter to persuade him to come to a supper-party at which he knew I was to be a guest ; but in the end he came, only to greet me in a manner that was far from reassuring.

By *Mme Prôt*, however, to whom I hastened to present my

XXIII. Traveller's Luck

respects, I was somewhat less coldly received. The circumstances in which I made my bow at least admitted the interest of curiosity.

Following the first conventional phrases, she asked me whether I was fond of music. Oh, unhopèd-for luck ! It seemed she adored it, and as I am myself a very fair musician, from that moment our hearts beat in unison.

We talked until supper, by when we were positively hand and glove together. She spoke of works on composition, I knew them all ; she spoke of the operas of the day, I had them all by heart ; she named the best-known composers, I had seen most of them with my own eyes. There was no end to it, for it was long since she had met anyone with whom to talk music ; and although she seemed to approach the subject as an amateur, I have since learned that she had at one time been a professional singing-mistress.

After supper, she sent for her portfolio ; she sang, I sang, we sang ; never have I put such zeal into my singing, and never have I enjoyed it more. *M. Prôt* had already more than once spoken of retiring, but she would not hear, and we were blaring, like two trumpets, the duet from the *Fausse Magie*,

Do you remember that glad day ?

when he finally insisted on departing.

This time there was no ignoring the summons ; but as we separated, *Mme Prôt* said : ' Citizen, when a man cultivates the arts as you do, he does not betray his country. I know that you want something from my husband : you shall have it, I promise you faithfully.'

When I heard these comforting words, I kissed her hand with all the warmth of my heart ; and sure enough, the very next morning, I received my safe-conduct, duly signed and magnificently sealed.

Thus was the aim of my journey accomplished. I rode home with head held high ; and thanks to harmony, that sweet child of Heaven, my ascension was postponed for a good number of years.

XXIV. Poetical

*Nulla placere diu, nec vivere carmina possunt,
 Quæ scribuntur aquæ potioribus. Ut male sanos
 Adscripsit Liber Satyris Faunisque poetas,
 Vina fere dulces oluerunt mane Camæne.
 Laudibus arguitur vini vinosus Homerus ;
 Ennius ipse pater numquam, nisi potus, ad arma
 Prosiluit dicenda : ' Forum putealque Libonis
 Mandabo siccis ; adimam cantare severis.'
 Hoc simul edixit, non cessavere poetæ
 Nocturno certare mero, putere diurno.*

HORACE, *Epist.* i. 19. 2.

IF I had had the time, I should have made a methodical selection of gastronomical poems from the *Greeks* and *Romans* to our own day, arranging them in historical sequence, to show the intimate connection which has at all times existed between the art of saying well and the art of eating well.

What I leave undone, another will do¹ ; we shall find that the table has always struck the keynote for the lyre, and thus we shall have one more proof of the influence of physical over moral.

Up to the middle of the eighteenth century such poems were chiefly made in praise of *Bacchus* and his gifts, for to drink wine, and to drink it without stint, was the highest degree of gustative exaltation to which man had thus far been able to attain.

Sometimes, to break the monotony and enlarge the field, Love was included in the theme, and it is by no means certain that the union was a happy one for love.

The discovery of the New World, and the numerous acquisitions which resulted, ushered in a new order of things.

Sugar, coffee, tea, chocolate, alcoholic liqueurs, and all the resulting mixtures, have made of good cheer a more comprehensive whole, of which wine is now but a more or less significant accessory ; for tea can very well take the place of wine at breakfast.²

¹ This, unless I am mistaken, makes the third work which I bequeath to the studiously inclined : 1. *Monograph on Obesity* ; 2. *Essay on the Theory and Practice of Shooting-luncheons* ; and 3. *Chronological Selection of Gastronomical Verse*.

² The *English* and *Dutch* eat bread and butter, fish, ham and eggs, and rarely drink anything but tea for breakfast.

XXIV. *Poetical*

Thus a far wider field is open to the poet of to-day ; he can sing the pleasures of the table without being driven of necessity to wallow in a tun ; and already charming pieces have been made in praise of the new treasures of gastronomy.

Like another, I have turned the pages, and enjoyed the fragrance of these ethereal offerings. But, while admiring the wealth of talent there displayed, and savouring the harmony of the verses, I felt more than another's satisfaction when I found that all these authors adhered to my own cherished system ; for nearly all these pretty things were made for dinner, or at dinner, or after dinner.

I hope skilled hands will ere long exploit that part of my domain which I leave to them ; meanwhile, I am content with offering to my readers a few pieces chosen by myself at random, and accompanied by very short notes, to prevent any racking of brains over the reason for my choice.

SONG OF DEMOCARES AT THE FEAST OF DENIAS

LET us drink, and sing *Bacchus*.

He delights in our dances, he delights in our songs ; he stifles envy, hatred, and regrets. Of the soft Graces and bewitching Loves he is the true begetter.

Let us love, let us drink, and sing *Bacchus*.

The future is not yet ; soon the present is no more ; life's sole moment is the moment of delight.

Let us love, let us drink, and sing *Bacchus*.

Wise in our follies, wealthy in our pleasures, let us trample the earth and its vain grandeur underfoot ; and in the drunkenness that then so sweetly invades our souls,

Let us drink, and sing *Bacchus*.

This song is taken from the *Travels of the Young Anacharsis* : no further reason is required.

The following is from *Motin*, who is said to have been the first poet to make drinking-songs in *France*. It belongs to the golden age of inebriation, and is not lacking in spirit :

TAVERN, I love thee more and more ;
Mine every want dost thou supply ;
I care not what 's without thy door,
Within, there 's none so rich as I :
Thy very dishclouts are to me
Finest of Holland napery.

When summer suns remorseless shine,
 No bosky dell doth solace hold
 So grateful or so fresh as thine ;
 And if I 'd laugh at winter's cold,
 Thy meanest faggot likes me then
 More than the forest of *Vincenne*.

Nothing in vain I ask of thee :
 I wish, and tripes turn ortolans,
 I no cardoons, but roses, see,
 Nor hear no strife but clinking cans :
 By inn and tavern ! There 's no dearth
 Of Paradises upon earth.

Praise *Bacchus* for his gift of wine,
 Yea, reeling praise its potent fumes ;
 Sure, 'tis an essence all divine,
 And whoso drinks not, yet assumes
 By grace of God the manly rank,
 Would be an angel if he drank.

Winking, the wine invites my kiss ;
 It drives the sadness out of me
 And fills my very soul with bliss ;
 O ne'er were lovers fond as we :
 I ravish, then am ravishèd,
 I capture and am captive led.

Quart upon pint when I 've sent down,
 Gaily each stranger I salute ;
 With tingling ears and ne'er a frown
 I forwards aim, and backwards shoot,
 And cut, who never learn'd to dance,
 The neatest caper in all France.

And 'tis my wish, till I be dead,
 With white wine, aye, and claret too,
 To keep my belly tenanted,
 So they but dwell in concord due ;
 For if they quarrel, I 'll not pause
 But straightway cast 'em out of doors.

The next is from *Racan*, one of our oldest poets ; it is full of grace and philosophy, has been made the model of many others, and still seems much younger than its progeny :

XXIV. Poetical

TO MAYNARD

WHEREFORE be yielding to dull care ?
Let 's rather drain this nectar rare
At one long draught, then call for more ;
It doth in excellence precede
E'en that which the young *Ganymede*
Into the cup of gods doth pour.

For lo, it makes an age to be
Less than a day, and, drinking, we
Grow young again for all our years ;
And every cupful drives away
One sorry dream of yesterday,
One of to-morrow's foolish fears.

Let 's drink then, *Maynard* : fill the bowl,
While unperceived the ages roll
Bearing us on to our last day ;
All praying 's vain ; we may not choose,
While years, no more than rivers, use
To halt or linger by the way.

Soon shall mild Spring come o'er the scene,
And Winter's white be turn'd to green :
The sea hath ebb and flow : what then ?
Why, nothing ; once our own brief youth
Doth yield to age, 'tis simple truth
That time ne'er brings it back again.

The laws of death prevail no less
In proud imperial palaces
Than in the meanest reed-roof'd hut ;
The fates apportion all our years ;
The king's, the swain's, with the same shears
Each thread indifferently they cut.

They all things utterly efface,
And undo, in the briefest space,
Whate'er most painfully we 've done ;
Soon they 'll be hailing us to drink,
Beyond the black flood's further brink,
The waters of oblivion.

The next is the Professor's own ; he has also set it to music,
but shrank from the ordeal of engraving and publication, despite

the pleasure he would have had in the knowledge that he was on all pianos. However, by an unheard-of stroke of luck, it can be sung and *it will be sung* to the air of the *vaudeville de Figaro* :

THE CHOICE OF THE SCIENCES

Glory let 's no more pursue ;
She doth sell her favours dear :
History forget we too
For a tale devoid of cheer :
Drink we like our fathers, who
Drank as much as they could hold :
Bring me wine, and wine that 's old ! (Twice.)

Go thy ways, Astronomy,
Stray without me in the skies :
Chemistry, I 've done with thee,
I 'd be ruin'd otherwise :
Come, Gastronomy, to me,
And I 'll fondly evermore
Gourmandise and thee adore ! (Twice.)

Young, I studied without cease,
Grey 's my pate with studying :
All the wisdom that was *Greece*
Never taught me anything :
Still I toil, but toil in peace,
Learning idleness instead :
Where 's the school to equal bed ? (Twice.)

Physics once were all my care ;
'Twas but wasted time, for why ?
All the drugs that ever were
Only help a man to die.
Now by Cookery I swear,
Which doth make us whole again :
Cooks surpass all other men ! (Twice.)

These my labours are but rude,
But, when sinks the sun to rest,
Then, lest overmuch I brood,
Love comes stealing to my breast,
And, despite the carping prude,
Love 's a pretty game to play :
Come, let 's to it while we may ! (Twice.)

XXIV. Poetical

I witnessed the *birth* of the following lines, hence my *plantation* of them here. Truffles are the gods of to-day, nor, perhaps, is our devotion altogether to our honour.

IMPROMPTU

SABLE truffle, hail to thee !
Thou dost victory assure
(For let 's not ungrateful be)
In the most delicious war ;
Thee, I say,
To pave the way,
Providence hath surely sent
For love and bliss and all content :
Eat we truffles every day !

By *M. Boscary de Villeplaine*, a distinguished amateur, and favourite pupil of the Professor's.

I conclude with some lines which properly belong to Meditation XXVI.

I tried to set them to music, but did not succeed to my satisfaction ; another will do better, especially if he gives free rein to his imagination. The accompaniment should be forceful, and should indicate, in the second stanza, the gradual decline of the patient.

THE DEATHBED

PHYSIOLOGICAL BALLADE

In all my senses life, alas ! grows faint,
Dull is mine eye, my body hath no heat ;
Louise must weep, her sorrow 's past restraint,
Softly her dear hand begs my heart to beat ;
I 've seen my friends come, I have seen them go,
One after one, breathing a last good-bye ;
Doctor, farewell ; enters the priest ; and so
'Tis time to die.

Fain would I pray, my brain is void of prayers ;
Speak, but my thoughts will no more spoken be :
Insistent echoings assail mine ears ;
Something, I know not what, seems fluttering free.
Now all is dark ; my breast upheaves to fill
With what shall feebly issue in a sigh :
'Twill wander o'er my lips, leaving them chill :
'Tis time to die.

By the Professor.

XXV. Monsieur Henrion de Pensey

IN all good faith I believed myself to have been the first, *in our own day*, to conceive the notion of an Academy of Gastronomes ; but it seems that, as must sometimes happen, I was forestalled. This may be seen from the following anecdote, the date of which goes back nearly fifteen years.

In 1812, *M. le Président Henrion de Pensey*, whose genial wit has outlived the mirrors of time, addressing three of the most eminent scientists of the day (*MM. de Laplace, Chaptal, and Berthollet*), said : ' I hold the discovery of a new dish, which sustains our appetite and prolongs our sense of pleasure, to be a far more interesting event than the discovery of a star ; of stars we see enough already.'

' Nor shall I ever,' the statesman continued, ' consider the sciences sufficiently honoured, or adequately represented, until I see a cook take his seat as a fully qualified member of the Institute.'

The good President was pleased to take a benevolent interest in my work ; he wished to provide me with a motto, and used to say that it was not his *Esprit des Lois* which opened the doors of the Academy to *M. de Montesquieu*. From him I discovered that the learned *Berriat Saint-Prix* had written a novel ; and he, too, suggested to me the chapter which treats of the alimentary activities of the *émigrés*. Therefore, since honour must be paid where honour is due, I have wrought the following quatrain, which contains at once his history and his eulogy :

LINES

TO BE INSCRIBED BENEATH THE PORTRAIT OF
M. HENRION DE PENSEY

TIRELESS in all his learned works was he,
And his great office worthily sustain'd ;
Yet the wise student still the friend remain'd,
Whose cares ne'er warp'd his geniality.

In 1814, *M. le Président Henrion* received the portfolio of Justice, and those who served under him in that ministry love to recall the terms in which he replied to them, when they

XXV. *M. Henrion de Pensey*

came before him in a body to present their respects, on the occasion of his taking office :

'*Messieurs*,' he said, in the paternal tones which so well became his years and stature, 'it is unlikely I shall be with you long enough to do you good ; but at least rest assured that I shall do you no harm.'

XXVI. *Indications*

My task is done ; but however, to prove that I am not quite out of breath, I shall proceed to kill three birds with one stone.

I am going to supply my readers of all nations with some information which will be to their advantage ; I am going to give my favourite artists a memorial they are fully worthy of, and the public a brand from the fire at which I warm my own hands.

I. *MME CHEVET*, provision-merchant, at No. 220 *Palais-Royal*, near the *Théâtre-Français*. I am rather a faithful client to her than a large consumer : our relations date from her first appearance above the gastronomical horizon, and she was once kind enough to mourn my death, on the occasion of what was, happily, a false alarm.

Mme Chevet is the essential link between extreme comestibility and great fortunes. She owes her prosperity to the purity of her commercial faith ; whatever time has tarnished vanishes as if by magic from her premises. The nature of her business requires her to leave a wide margin of profit ; but once the price is agreed upon, the purchaser is certain of obtaining the very highest quality.

This faith will be hereditary ; already the young ladies, her daughters, who as yet have scarcely emerged from childhood, unswervingly adhere to their mother's principles.

Mme Chevet has envoys in every land where the wishes of the most capricious gastronome can possibly be gratified ; and the more rivals she has, the higher waxes her reputation.

II. *M. ACHARD*, pastrycook and confectioner, No. 9 *rue de Grammont*, a native of *Lyons*, set up shop some ten years ago, and achieved fame through his biscuits and vanilla wafers, which long defied imitation.

Everything in his shop has an air of finished perfection, and even of coquetry, vainly to be sought elsewhere. The hand of man is unapparent : you would say, the natural products of some enchanted land ; and for this reason all that he makes is carried off the same day, and may be said to have no morrow.

In the dog-days, not a moment passes but some brilliant chariot draws up at No. 9, loaded, most often, with a handsome *Titus* and his fair befeathered lady. The former dashes into *Achard's*, there to arm himself with a copious horn of dainties. On his emerging, he is greeted with '*O mon ami ! Que cela a bonne mine !*' or as like as not, '*O dear ! How it looks good ! My mouth ! (sic).*' And swiftly the horse leaps forward and bears them away towards the *Bois de Boulogne*.

Gourmands are a race both ardent and good-natured, whence they long put up with the asperities of a most ungracious shop-girl. This blot has been removed ; now a fresh form stands behind the counter, and *Mlle Anna Achard's* small and pretty hands lend new worth to preparations which already are beyond the need of such advertisement.

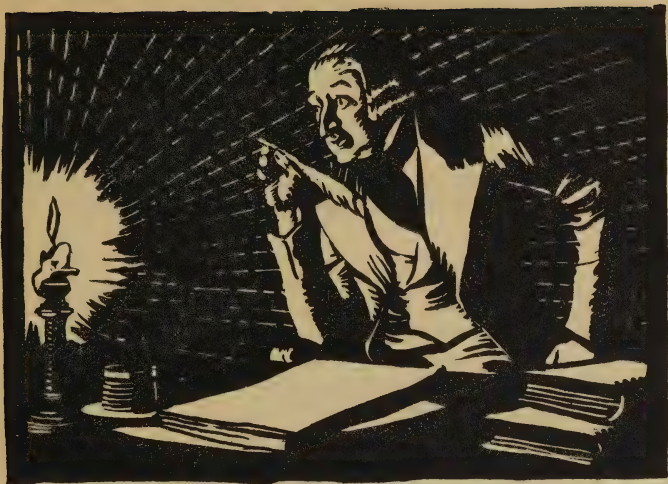
III. Upon *M. LIMET*, at No. 79 *rue de Richelieu* (and thus my neighbour), who is baker to several highnesses, I too have fixed my choice.

Having taken over a business of no great distinction, he swiftly raised it to a high degree of prosperity and fame.

His taxed bread is extraordinarily good ; and it is difficult to achieve, in the most expensive bread, such whiteness, savour, and lightness.

Foreigners, as well as people from the remotest country districts, always find the bread they are accustomed to at *M. Limet's* ; his customers come and go in person, and not seldom line up in a queue.

His success will not be wondered at, when it is known that *M. Limet* steers clear of the groove of routine, is ever striving to discover new resources, and is advised by scientists of the highest reputation.



XXVII. Privations

AN HISTORICAL ELEGY

FIRST Parents of mankind, whose gourmandism is historical, ye who lost all for an apple, what would you not have done for a truffled turkey ? But in the earthly paradise were neither cooks nor confectioners :

How I pity you !

Great kings who laid proud *Troy* in ruins, your valour will go down from age to age ; but your table was wretched. Reduced to ox-thighs and the backs of swine, you never knew the charms of *matelote*, no, nor the bliss of chicken fricassee :

How I pity you !

Chloe, *Aspasia*, and ye all whom Grecian chisels made eternal for the despair of all our beauties of to-day, never did your bewitching mouths draw in the suavity of rose nor vanilla meringue ; you scarcely even rose to gingerbread :

How I pity you !

Varieties

Sweet priestesses of *Vesta*, loaded with such honours, threatened also with the pangs of direst torture, ah, if you had but tasted our syrups that refresh the soul, crystallised fruits that scorn the changing seasons, and fragrant creams, the marvels of to-day !

How I pity you !

Roman financiers, who squeezed the known world dry of gold, your famous banquet-halls ne'er saw our many-flavoured ices, cold to brave the torrid zone, nor yet our jellies which are joy in idleness :

How I pity you !

Unconquerable paladins, made famous in the songs of troubadours, alas ! when you had smitten giants hip and thigh, set damsels free, and wiped out armies utterly, no black-eyed captive maid ere brought you sparkling champagne, Madeira malvoisie, nor liqueurs, the pride of the grand century ; you were reduced to ale or sour herb-flavoured wine :

How I pity you !

Mitred and crozier'd abbots, dispensers of the grace of heaven, and you fierce Templars, who took arms to destroy the *Saracens*, you never knew sweet chocolate the restorer, nor the Arabian bean, that kindles thought :

How I pity you !

Proud dames who raised your almoners and pages to the highest rank, to fill the void left by your crusading lords, never did you taste with them the charm of biscuits, nor the bliss of macaroons :

How I pity you !

And you, too, gastronomes of 1825, sated in the bosom of plenty, and already dreaming of new dishes, not for you the mysteries science shall reveal in 1900, mineral esculences perchance, or liqueurs distilled from an hundred atmospheres ; not yours to see what travellers yet unborn shall bring from that half of the globe which still remains to be discovered or explored :

How I pity you !

ENVOY,
to the
Gastronomes of the Two Worlds

EXCELLENCIES :

The work which I humbly lay at your feet seeks to unfold before the eyes of all men the principles of that science of which yourselves are both the ornament and mainstay.

I would light, too, a first burnt-offering to the immortal maid, *Gastronomy*, who, but newly decked with her crown of stars, already overtops her sisters, even as *Calypso* rose by head and shoulders taller than the sweet nymphs grouped about her.

Soon now shall the temple of *Gastronomy* rear its mighty portals heavenward, to be an adornment for the world's metropolis ; you shall set it echoing with your voices ; and when the Academy foretold by the oracles shall be stablished on the unshifting corner-stones of pleasure and necessity, you, O enlightened gourmands and dear boon-companions, shall be the members thereof and its correspondents.

In the meantime, lift your radiant faces heavenward ; go forward in all your might and majesty ; the world of esculence lies open before you.

Work, then, Excellencies ; let the good of the art be ever at your hearts ; digest in your particular interest ;

Envoy

and if, in the course of your labours, it befalls you to
light upon some notable discovery, be pleased to make it
known to

Your most obedient

humble servant,

THE AUTHOR OF THE GASTRONOMICAL MEDITATIONS.

*So ends the Physiology of Taste, composed in French
one hundred years ago by Jean Anthelme
Brillat-Savarin ; now newly served
up in English : ad majorem
Gastronomiæ gloriam
EXPLICIT.*

